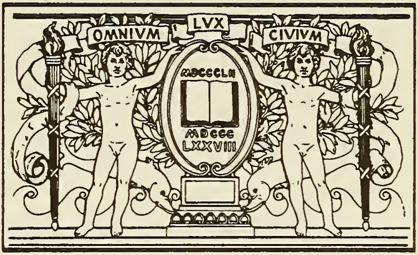
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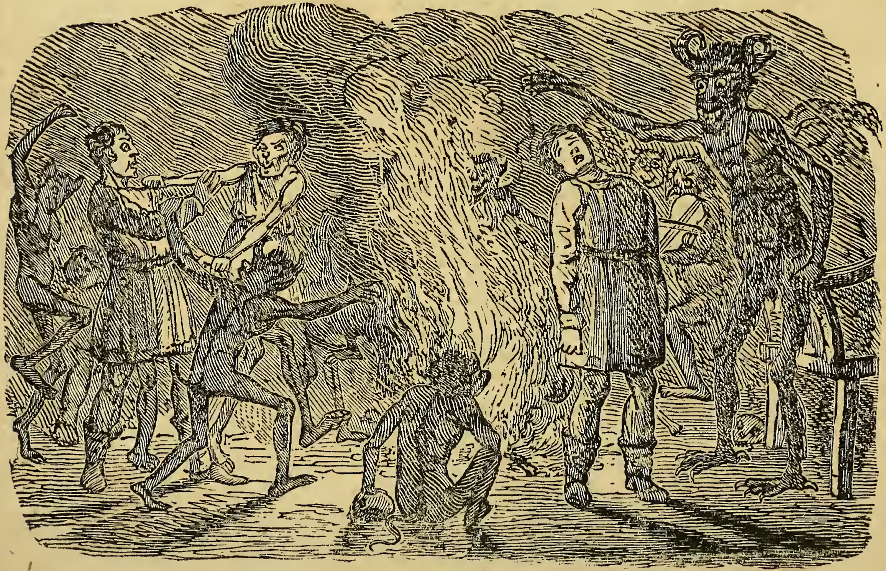

STORY OF THE BOARWOLF.—Page 116.

TALES OF TERROR,

OR THE

MYSTERIES OF MAGIC:

A SELECTION OF

WONDERFUL AND SUPERNATURAL STORIES

TRANSLATED FROM THE CHINESE, TURKISH, AND GERMAN.

COMPILED BY HENRY ST. CLAIR.

TWO VOLUMES IN ONE.

VOL. I.

‘ I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word
“ Would harrow up thy soul; freeze thy young blood,
“ Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres;
“ Thy knotted and combined locks to part
“ And each particular hair to stand on end,
“ Like quills upon the fretful porcupine.”—*Shakspeare.*

PHILADELPHIA:
JESPER HARDING.
1848.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1833, by
Charles Gaylord,
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PREFACE.

The Editor of this volume makes no doubt that it will be an acceptable offering to the Public. There was time, indeed, when men were burned for witchcraft, and Quakers were hanged for non-conformity, that Tales like those which compose this collection would have been improper for publication. That time has passed away—old women ride through New-England on broomsticks no longer—children are no longer hushed to rest by threats of the coming of the Devil—

> "E'en the last lingering phantom of the brain,
> The churchyard ghost, is now at rest again!"

Stories founded on supernatural agency cannot now mislead the young, or terrify the old. At the same time there are no tales which excite such intense interest, or will bear frequent perusal so well. Witness the Arabian Nights Entertainment, the Tales of the Genii, and many other collections of a like nature, which have been the delight of centuries past, and will constitute a large portion of the amusement of centuries future.

These works, however, have become rather hacknied. Every one knows the Arabian Tales by rote; the Tales of the Genii are scarcely less familiar; even Winter Evenings at Home are not sought with the same avidity they once were. The Editor has, therefore, sought and put together such supernatural tales as are written with equal power, and are less generally known. He is confident that his stories will have their day also, and that a long one.

The Editor hopes, that one circumstance, if no other, will recommend his book to the favorable consideration of the public. Great care has been taken to admit nothing of immoral or irreligious tendency. The stories are such as will not raise a blush on the cheek of the most fastidious. Some of them have no particular end, save the amusement of the reader; others contain useful allegories, which all may profit by reading. If we may be permitted to make any distinction among them, we would particularly notice that powerfully written tale, The Magic Dice, in which many and useful lessons may be found. In it, the danger of tampering with evil, the folly of impertinent curiosity, the evil consequences of gaming, and the necessity of prudence in the choice of a companion for life, are set forth in the guise of an allegory, in a light no less vivid than novel.

In conclusion we may say, that many may be benefitted, and none can be injured, by the perusal of this volume.

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THE MAGIC DICE,

AN AWFUL NARRATION.

[From the German.]

For more than one hundred and fifty years had the family of Schroll been settled at Taubendorf; and generally respected for knowledge and refinement of manners superior to its station. Its present representative, the bailiff Elias Schroll, had in his youth attached himself to literature ; but later in life, from love to the country, he had returned to his native village, and lived there in great credit and esteem.

During this whole period of one hundred and fifty years, tradition had recorded only one Schroll as having borne a doubtful character: he, indeed, as many persons affirmed, had dealt with the devil. Certain it is that there was still preserved in the house a scrutoire fixed in the wall, and containing some mysterious manuscripts attributed to him; and the date of the year—1630, which was carved upon the front, tallied with his era The key of this scrutoire had been constantly handed down to the eldest son, through five generations—with a solemn charge to take care that no other eye or ear should ever become acquainted with its contents. Every precaution had been taken to guard against accidents or oversights: the lock was so constructed that, even with the right key, it could not be opened without special instructions; and, for still greater security, the present proprietor had added a padlock of most elaborate workmanship, which presented a sufficient obstacle before the main lock could be approached.

In vain did the curiosity of the whole family direct itself to this scrutoire. Nobody had succeeded in discovering any part of its contents, except Rudolph, the only son of the bailiff: he *had* succeeded: at least, his own belief was, that the old folio, with gilt edges, and bound in black velvet, which he had one day surprised his father anxiously reading, belonged to the mysterious scrutoire. For the door of the scrutoire, though not open, was unlocked; and Elias had hastily closed the book with great agitation, at the same time ordering his son out of the room in no very gentle tone. At the time of this incident, Rudolph was about twelve years of age.

Since that time, the young man had sustained two great losses, in the deaths of his excellent mother, and a sister tenderly beloved. His father also had suffered deeply in health and spirits under these afflictions. Every day he grew more fretful and humorsome; and Rudolph, upon his final return home from school in his eighteenth year, was shocked to find him greatly altered in mind as well as in person. His flesh had fallen away, and he seemed to be consumed by some internal strife of thought. It was evidently his own opinion that he was standing on the edge of the grave: and he employed himself unceasingly in arranging his affairs, and in making his successor acquainted with all such arrangements as regarded his more peculiar interests. One evening, as Rudolph came in suddenly from a neighbor's house, and happened to pass the scrutoire, he found the door wide open, and the inside obviously empty. Looking round, he observed his father standing on the hearth close to a great fire, in the midst of which was consuming the old black book.

Elias entreated his son earnestly to withdraw: but Rudolph could not command himself; and he exclaimed—" I doubt, sir, that this is the book which belongs to the scrutoire."

His father assented with visible confusion.

" Well, then, allow me to say, that I am greatly surprised at your treating in this way an heir-loom that; for a century and more, has always been transmitted to the eldest son."

" You are in the right, my son," said the father, affectionately taking him by the hand: "You are partly in the right : it is not quite defensible, I admit : and I myself have had many scruples, about the course I have taken. Yet still I feel myself glad, upon the whole, that I have destroyed this accursed book. He that wrote it never prospered; all traditions agree in that :—why then leave to one's descendants a miserable legacy of unhallowed mysteries?

This excuse, however, did not satisfy Rudolph. He maintained that his father had made an aggression upon his rights of inheritance; and he argued the point so well, that Elias himself began to think his son's complaint was not altogether groundless. The whole of the next day they behaved to each other —not unkindly, but yet with some coolness. At night, Elias could bear this no longer; and he said, " Dear Rudolph, we have lived long together in harmony and love; let us not begin to show an altered countenance to each other during the few days that I have yet to live."

Rudolph pressed his father's offered hand with a filial warmth; and the latter went on to say—" I proposed to communicate to you by word of mouth the contents of the book which I have destroyed : I will do this with good faith and without reserve— unless you yourself can be persuaded to forego your right to such a communication."

Elias paused—flattering himself, as it seemed, that his son *would* forego his right. But in this he was mistaken: Rudolph was far too eager for the disclosure; and earnestly pressed his father to proceed.

Again Elias hesitated and threw a glance of profound love and pity upon his son—a glance that conjured him to think better and to wave his claim: but, this being at length obviously hopeless, he spoke as follows:—"The book relates chiefly to yourself: it points to you as *to the last of our race.* You turn pale. Surely, Rudolph, it would have been better that you had resolved to trouble yourself no farther about it?"

"No," said Rudolph, recovering his self-possession, "No: for it still remains a question whether this prophecy be true."

"It does so,—it does, no doubt."

"And is this all that the book says in regard to me?"

"No: it is *not* all: there is something more. But possibly you will only laugh when you hear it: for at this day nobody believes in such strange stories. However, be *that* as it may, the book goes on to say plainly and positively, that the *Evil One* (Heaven protect us!) will make you an offer tending greatly to your worldly advantage."

Rudolph laughed outright; and replied that, judging by the grave exterior of the book, he had looked to hear of more serious contents.

"Well, well my son," said the old man, "I know not that I myself am disposed to place much confidence in these tales of contracts with the devil. But, true or not, we ought not to laugh at them Enough for me that, under any circumstances, I am satisfied you have so much natural piety, that you would reject all worldly good fortune that could meet you upon unhallowed paths."

Here Elias would have broken off: but Rudolph said, "One thing more I wish to know: What is to be the nature of the good fortune offered to me? And did the book say whether I should accept it or not?"

"Upon the nature of the good fortune the writer has not explained himself: all that he says is, that, by a discreet use of it, it is in your power to become a very great man. Whether you will accept it—but God preserve thee, my child, from any thought so criminal—upon this question there is a profound silence. Nay, it seems even as if this trader in black arts had at that very point been overtaken by death: for he had broken off in the very middle of a word. The Lord have mercy upon his soul!"

Little as Rudolph's faith was in the possibility of such a proposal, yet he was uneasy at his father's communication, and visibly disturbed; so that the latter said to him—"Had it not been better, Rudolph, that you had left the mystery to be buried with me in the grave?".

Rudolph said—"No:" but his restless eye, and his agitated air, too evidently approved the justice of his father's solicitude.

The deep impression upon Rudolph's mind from this conversation—the last he was ever to hold with his father—was rendered still deeper by the solemn event which followed. About the middle of that same night, he was awakened suddenly by a summons to his father's bed-side: his father was dying, and earnestly asking for him.

"My son!" he exclaimed with an expression of the bitterest anguish; stretched out both his arms in supplication towards him; and, in the anguish of the effort, he expired.

The levity of youthful spirits soon dispersed the gloom which at first hung over Rudolph's mind. Surrounded by jovial companions at the university which he now entered, he found no room left in his bosom for sorrow or care: and his heaviest affliction was the refusal of his guardian at times to comply with his too frequent importunities for money.

After a residence of one year at the university, some youthful irregularities in which Rudolph was concerned subjected him, jointly with three others, to expulsion. Just at that time, the seven years' war happened to break out: two of the party, named Theiler and Werl, entered the military service together with Rudolph; the last very much against the will of a young woman to whom he was engaged. Charlotte herself, however, became reconciled to this arrangement, when she saw that her objections availed nothing against Rudolph's resolution, and heard her lover describe in the most flattering colors his own return to her arms in the uniform of an officer: for that his distinguished courage must carry him in the very first campaign to the rank of lieutenant was as evident to his own mind as that he could not possibly fall on the field of battle.

The three friends were fortunate enough to be placed in the same company. But, in the first battle, Werl and Theiler were stretched lifeless by Rudolph's side: Werl, by a musket-ball through his heart, and Theiler by a cannon-shot which took off his head.

Soon after this event, Rudolph himself returned home: but how? Not, as he had fondly anticipated, in the brilliant decorations of a distinguished officer; but as a prisoner in close custody: in a transport of youthful anger he had been guilty, in company with two others, of insubordination and mutiny.

The court-martial sentenced them to death. The judges, however, were so favorably impressed by their good conduct, whilst under confinement; that they would certainly have recommended them to the royal mercy, if it had not been deemed necessary to make an example. However, the sentence was so far mitigated, that only one of the three was to be shot. And which was he? That point was reserved in suspense until the day of execution, when it was to be decided by the cast of the dice.

As the fatal day drew near, a tempest of passionate grief assailed the three prisoners. One of them was agitated by the tears of his father; the second by the sad situation of a sickly wife and two children; the third, Rudolph, in case the lot fell upon him, would be summoned to part not only with his life, but also with a young and blooming bride, that lay nearer to his heart than any thing else. "Ah!" said he, on the evening before the day of final decision, "Ah! if but this once I could secure a lucky throw of the dice!" And scarce was the wish uttered, when his comrade Werl, whom he had seen fall by his side in the field of battle, stepped into his cell.

"So, brother Schroll, I suppose you didn't much expect to see me?"

"No, indeed, did I not"—exclaimed Rudolph in consternation: for in fact, on the day after the battle, he had seen this very Werl committed to the grave.

"Ay, ay, its strange enough, I allow: but there are not many such surgeons as he is that belongs to our regiment: he had me dug up, and brought me round again, I'll assure you. One would think the man was a conjurer. Indeed there are many things he can do which I defy any man to explain; and, to say the truth, I'm convinced he can execute impossibilities.

"Well, so let him, for aught that I care: all his art will scarcely do me any good."

"Who knows, brother? who knows? The man is in this town at this very time; and for old friendship's sake I've just spoken to him about you: and he has promised me a lucky throw of the dice that shall deliver you from all danger."

"Ah!" said the dejected Rudolph, "but even this would be of little service to me."

"Why, how so?" asked the other.

"How so? Why, because—even if there were such dice (a matter I very much dispute)—yet I could never allow myself to turn aside, by black arts, any bad luck designed for myself upon the heads of either of my comrades."

"Now this, I suppose, is what you call being noble? But excuse me if I think that in such cases one's first duty is to oneself."

"Ay, but consider, one of my comrades has an old father to maintain, the other a sick wife with two children."

"Schroll, Schroll, if your young bride were to hear you, I fancy she wouldn't think herself much flattered. Does poor Charlotte deserve that you should not bestow a thought on her and her fate? A dear young creature, that places her whole happiness in you, has nearer claims (I think) upon your consideration than an old dotard with one foot in the grave, or a wife and two children that are nothing at all to you. Ah! what a deal of good might you do in the course of a long life with your Charlotte!——So, then, you really are determined to reject the course which I point out to you? Take care, Schroll! If you disdain my offer, and the lot should chance to fall upon you,—take care lest the thought of a young bride whom you have betrayed,—take care, I say, lest this thought should add to the bitterness of death when you come to kneel down on the sand-hill. However, I've given you advice sufficient, and have discharged my conscience. Look to it yourself: and farewell!"

"Stay, brother, a word or two;" said Rudolph, who was powerfully impressed by the last speech, and the picture of domestic happiness held up before him, which he had often dallied with in thought both when alone and in company with Charlotte:—"stay a moment. Undoubtedly, I do not deny that I wish for life, if I could receive it a gift from Heaven: and *that* is not impossible. Only I would not willingly have the guilt upon my conscience of being the cause of misery to another. However, if the man you speak of can tell, I should be glad that you would ask him upon which of us three the lot of death will fall. Or—stay; don't ask him," said Rudolph, sighing deeply.

"I have already asked him," was the answer.

"Ah! have you so? *And it is after his reply that you come to me with this counsel?*"

The foretaste of death overspread the blooming face of Rudolph with a livid paleness: thick drops of sweat gathered upon his forehead; and the other exclaimed with a sneer—"I'm going: you take too much time for consideration. May be you will see and recognise me at the place of execution: and, if so, I shall have the dice with me; and it will not be too late even then to give me a sign: but take notice I can't promise to attend."

Rudolph raised his forehead from the palm of his hand, in which he had buried it during the last moments of his perturbation, and would have spoken something in reply: but his counsellor was already gone. He felt glad and yet at the same time sorry. The more he considered the man and his appearance, so much the less seemed his resemblance to his friend whom he had left buried on the field of battle. This friend had been the very soul of affectionate cordiality—a temper that was altogether wanting in his present counsellor. No! the scornful and insulting tone with which he treated the unhappy prisoner, and the unkind manner with which he had left him, convinced Schroll that he and Werl must be two different persons. Just at this moment a thought struck him, like a blast of lightning, of the black book that had perished in the fire and its ominous contents. A lucky cast of the dice! Ay; *that* then was the shape in which the tempter had presented himself; and heartily glad he felt that he had not availed himself of his suggestions.

But this temper of mind was speedily changed by his young bride, who hurried in, soon after, sobbing, and flung her arms about his neck. He told her of the proposal which had been made to him; and she was shocked that he had not immediately accepted it.

With a bleeding heart, Rudolph objected that so charming and lovely a creature could not miss of a happy fate, even if he should be forced to quit her. But she protested vehemently that he or nobody should enjoy her love.

The clergyman, who visited the prisoner immediately after her departure, restored some composure to his mind, which had been altogether banished by the presence of his bride. "Blessed are they who die in the Lord!" said the gray-haired divine; and with so much earnestness and devotion, that this single speech had the happiest effect upon the prisoner's mind.

On the morning after this night of agitation—the morning of the fatal day—the three criminals saw each other for the first time since their arrest. Community of fate, and long separation from each other, contributed to draw still closer the bond of friendship that had been first knit on the field of battle. Each of the three testified a lively abhorrence for the wretched necessity of throwing death to some one of his comrades, by any cast of the dice which should bring life to himself. Dear as their several friends were to all, yet at this moment the brotherly league, which had been tried and proved in the furnace of battle, was triumphant over all opposing considerations. Each would have preferred death himself, rather than escape it at the expense of his comrade.

The worthy clergyman, who possessed their entire confidence, found them loudly giving utterance to this heroic determination. Shaking his head, he pointed their attention to those who had claims upon them whilst living, and for whom it was their duty to wish to live as long as possible. "Place your trust in God!" said he: "resign yourselves to him! He it is that will bring about the decision through your hands; and think not of ascribing that power to yourselves, or to his lifeless instruments—the dice. He, without whose permission no sparrow falls to the ground, and who has numbered every hair upon your head—He it is that knows best what is good for you; and he only.

The prisoners assented by squeezing his hand, embraced each other, and received the sacrament in the best disposition of mind. After this ceremony they breakfasted together, in as resigned,—nay, almost in as joyous a mood as if the gloomy and bloody morning which lay before them were ushering in some gladsome festival.

When, however, the procession was marshalled from the outer gate, and their beloved friends were admitted to utter their last farewells, then again the sternness of their courage sank beneath the burden of their melancholy fate. "Rudolph!" whispered amongst the rest his despairing bride, "Rudolph! why did you reject the help that was offered to you?" He adjured her not to add to the bitterness of parting; and she in turn adjured him, a little before the word of command was given to march—which robbed her of all consciousness—to make a sign to the stranger who had volunteered his offer of deliverance, provided he should anywhere observe him in the crowd.

The streets and the windows were lined with spectators. Vainly did each of the criminals seek, by accompanying the clergyman in his prayers, to shelter himself from the thought, that all return, perhaps, was cut off from him. The large house of his bride's father reminded Schroll of a happiness that was now lost to him forever, if any faith were to be put in the words of his yesterday's monitor; and a very remarkable faintness came over him. The clergyman, who was acquainted with the circumstances of his case, and, therefore, guessed the occasion of his sudden agitation, laid hold of his arm—and said, with a powerful voice, that he who trusted in God would assuredly see all his *righteous* hopes accomplished—in this world, if it were God's pleasure; but, if not, in a better.

These were words of comfort: but their effect lasted only for a few moments. Outside the city-gate his eyes were met by the sand-hill already thrown up—a spectacle which renewed his earthly hopes and fears. He threw a hurried glance about him; but nowhere could he see his last night's visiter.

Every moment the decision came nearer and nearer. It has begun. One of the three has already shaken the box: the die is cast: he has thrown a six. This throw was now registered amidst the solemn silence of the crowd. The by-standers regarded him with silent congratulations in their eyes. For this man and Rudolph were the two special objects of the general compassion: this man as the husband and father; Rudolph as the youngest and handsomest, and because some report had gone abroad of his superior education and attainments.

Rudolph was youngest in a double sense—youngest in years, and youngest in the service: for both reasons he was to throw last. It may be supposed, therefore, how much all present trembled for the poor delinquent, when the second of his comrades likewise flung a six.

Prostrated in spirit, Rudolph stared at the unpropitious die. Then a second time he threw a hurried glance around him—and that so full of despair, that from horrid sympathy a violent shuddering ran through the by-standers. "Here is no deliverer," thought Rudolph, "none to see me, or to hear me! And if there were, it is now too late: for no change of the die is any longer possible." So saying, he seized the fatal die; convulsively his hand clutches it; and before the throw is made he feels that the die is broken in two.

During the universal thrill of astonishment which succeeded to this strange accident, he looked round again. A sudden shock, and a sudden joy, fled through his countenance. Not far from him, in the dress of a pedlar, stands Theiler without a wound—the comrade whose head had been carried off on the field of battle by a cannon ball. Rudolph made an under sign to him with his eye. For, clear as it now was to his mind with whom he was dealing, yet the dreadful trial of the moment overpowered his better resolutions.

The military commission were in some confusion. No provision having been thought of against so strange an accident, there was no second die at hand. They were just on the point of despatching a messenger to fetch one, when the pedlar presented himself with the offer of supplying the loss. The new die is examined by the auditor, and delivered to the unfortunate Rudolph. He throws: the die is lying on the drum; and again it is a six! The amazement is universal: nothing is decided: the throws must be repeated. They *are:* and Weber, the husband of the sick wife—the father of the two half-naked children, flings the lowest throw.

Immediately the officer's voice was heard wheeling his men into their position: on the part of Weber there was as little delay. The overwhelming injury to his wife and children inflicted by his own act, was too mighty to contemplate. He shook hands rapidly with his two comrades; stept nimbly into his place; kneeled down; the word of command was heard—"Lower your muskets;" instantly he dropt the fatal handkerchief with the gesture of one who prays for some incalculable blessing: and in the twinkling of an eye, sixteen bullets had lightened the heart of the poor mutineer of its whole immeasurable freight of anguish.

All the congratulations, with which they were welcomed on their return into the city, fell powerless on Rudolph's ear! Scarcely could even Charlotte's caresses affect with any pleasure the man who believed himself to have sacrificed his comrade, through collusion with a fiend.

The importunities of Charlotte prevailed over all objections which the pride of her aged father suggested against a son-in-law who had been capitally convicted. The marriage was solemnized: but at the wedding-festival, amidst the uproar of merriment, the parties chiefly concerned were not happy or tranquil. In no long time the father-in-law died, and by his death placed the young couple in a state of complete independence. But Charlotte's fortune, and the remainder of what Rudolph had inherited from his father, were speedily swallowed up by an idle and luxurious mode of living. Rudolph now began to ill-use his wife. To escape from his own conscience, he plunged into all sorts of dissolute courses. And very remarkable it was, that, from manifesting the most violent abhorrence for every thing which could lead his thoughts to his own fortunate cast of the die, he gradually came to entertain so uncontrollable a passion for playing at dice, that he spent all his time in the company of those with whom he could turn this passion to account. His house had long since passed out of his own hands: not a soul could be found anywhere to lend him a shilling. The sickly widow of Weber and her two children, whom he had hitherto supported, lost their home and means of livelihood. And in no long space of time the same fate fell upon himself, his wife, and his child.

Too little used to labor to have any hope of improving his condition in that way, one day he bethought himself that the Medical Institute was in the habit of purchasing from poor people, during their life-time, the reversion of their bodies. To this establishment he addressed himself; and the ravages in his personal appearance and health, caused by his dissolute life, induced them the more readily to lend an ear to his proposal.

But the money thus obtained, which had been designed for the support of his wife and half-famished children, was squandered at the gaming-table. As the last dollar vanished, Schroll bit one of the dice furiously between his teeth. Just then he heard these words whispered at his ear—"Gently, brother, gently: All dice do not split in two like that on the sand hill." He looked round in agitation, but saw no trace of any one who could have uttered the words.

With dreadful imprecations on himself and these with whom he had played, he flung out of the gaming-house, homewards on his road to the wretched garret where his wife and children were awaiting his return and his succour. But here the poor creatures, tormented by hunger and cold, pressed upon him so importunately, that he had no way to deliver himself from misery but by flying from the spectacle. But whither could he go thus late at night, when his utter poverty was known in every ale-house? Roaming he knew not whither, he found himself at length in the church-yard. The moon was shining solemnly upon the quiet grave-stones, though obscured at intervals by piles of stormy clouds. Rudolph shuddered at nothing but at himself and his own existence. He strode with bursts of laughter over the dwellings of the departed; and entered a vault, which gave him shelter from the icy blasts of wind, which now began to bluster more loudly than before. The moon threw her rays into the vault full upon the golden legend inscribed in the wall—"*Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord!*" Schroll took up a spade that was sticking in the ground, and struck with it furiously against the gilt letters on the wall: but they seemed indestructible; and he was going to assault them with a mattock, when suddenly a hand touched him on the shoulder, and said to him, "Gently, comrade: thy pains are all thrown away." Schroll uttered a loud exclamation of terror: for, in these words, he heard the voice of Weber, and, on turning round, recognised his whole person.

"What wouldst thou have?" asked Rudolph,—"What art thou come for?"—"To comfort thee," replied the figure, which now suddenly assumed the form and voice of the pedlar to whom Schroll was indebted for the fortunate die. "Thou hast forgotten me: and thence it is that thou art fallen into misfortune. Look up and acknowledge thy friend in need that comes only to make thee happy again."

"If *that* be thy purpose, wherefore is it that thou wearest a shape before which, of all others that have been on earth, I have most reason to shudder?"

"The reason is---because I must not allow to any man my help or my converse on too easy terms. Before ever my die was allowed to turn thy fate, I was compelled to give thee certain intimations from which thou knewest with whom it was that thou wert dealing."

"With whom, then, was it that I was dealing?" cried Schroll, staring with his eyes wide open, and his hair standing erect.

"Thou knewest, comrade, at that time---thou knowest at this moment," said the pedlar, laughing, and tapping him on the shoulder. "But what is it that thou desirest?"

Schroll struggled internally; but, overcome by his desolate condition, he said immediately---"Dice: I would have dice that shall win whenever I wish."

"Very well: but first of all stand out of the blaze of this golden writing on the wall: it is a writing that has nothing to do with thee. Here are dice: never allow them to go out of thy own possession: for *that* might bring thee into great trouble. When thou needest me, light a fire at the last stroke of the midnight hour; throw in my dice, and with loud laughter. They will crack once or twice, and then split. At that moment catch at them in the flames: but let not the moment slip or thou art lost. And let not thy courage be daunted by the sights that I cannot but send before me whensoever I appear. Lastly, avoid choosing any holy day for this work; and beware of the priest's benediction. Here, take the dice."

Schroll caught at the dice with one hand, whilst with the other he covered his eyes. When he next looked up, he was standing alone.

He now quitted the burying-ground to return as hastily as possible to the gaming-house, where the light of candles was still visible. But it was with the greatest difficulty that he obtained money enough from a "friend" to enable him to make the lowest stake which the rules allowed. He found it a much easier task to persuade the company to use the dice which he had brought with him. They saw in this nothing but a very common superstition—and no possibility of any imposture, as they and he should naturally have benefited alike by the good luck supposed to accompany the dice. But the nature of the charm was—that only the possessor of the dice enjoyed their supernatural powers; and hence it was that, towards morning, Schroll reeled home, intoxicated with wine and pleasure, and laden with the money of all present, to the garret where his family were lying, half frozen and famished.

Their outward condition was immediately improved. The money which Schroll had won was sufficient not only for their immediate and most pressing wants: it was enough also to pay for a front apartment, and to leave a sum sufficient for a very considerable stake.

With this sum, and in better attire, Rudolph repaired to a gaming-house of more fashionable resort—and came home in the evening laden with gold.

He now opened a gaming establishment himself; and so much did his family improve in external appearances within a very few weeks, that the police began to keep a watchful eye over him.

This induced him to quit the city, and to change his residence continually. All the different baths of Germany he resorted to beyond other towns: but, though his dice perseveringly maintained their luck, he yet never accumulated any money. Everything was squandered upon the dissipated life which he and his family pursued.

At length at the baths of ——— the matter began to take an unfortunate turn. A violent passion for a beautiful young lady whom Rudolph had attached himself to in vain at balls, concerts, and even at church, suddenly bereft him of all sense and discretion. One night, when Schroll (who now styled himself Captain Von Schrollshausen) was anticipating a master-stroke from his dice, probably for the purpose of winning the lady by the display of overflowing wealth and splendor,—suddenly they lost their virtue, and failed him without warning. Hitherto they had lost only when he willed them to lose: but, on this occasion, they failed at so critical a moment, as to lose him not only all his own money, but a good deal beside that he had borrowed.

Foaming with rage, he came home. He asked furiously after his wife: she was from home. He examined the dice attentively; and it appeared to him that they were not his own. A powerful suspicion seized upon him. Madame Von Schrollshausen had her own gaming circle as well as himself. Without betraying its origin, he had occasionally given her a few specimens of the privilege attached to his dice: and she had pressed him earnestly to allow her the use of them for a single evening. It was true he never parted with them even on going to bed: but it was possible that they might have been changed whilst he was sleeping. The more he brooded upon this suspicion, the more it strengthened: from being barely possible, it became probable; from a probability it ripened into a certainty; and this certainty received the fullest confirmation at this moment, when she returned home in the gayest temper, and announced to him that she had been this night overwhelmed with good luck; in proof of which, she poured out upon the table a considerable sum in gold coin. "And now," she added laughingly, "I care no longer for your dice; nay, to tell you the truth, I would not exchange my own for them."

Rudolph, now confirmed in his suspicions, demanded the dice — as his property that had been purloined from him. She laughed and refused. He insisted with more vehemence; she retorted with warmth: both parties were irritated: and, at length, in the extremity of his wrath, Rudolph snatched up a knife and stabbed her: the knife pierced her heart: she uttered a single sob—was convulsed for a moment—and expired. "Cursed accident!" he exclaimed, when it clearly appeared, on examination, that the dice which she had in her purse were not those which he suspected himself to have lost.

No eye but Rudolph's had witnessed the murder: the child had slept on undisturbed: but circumstances betrayed it to the knowledge of the landlord; and, in the morning, he was preparing to make it public. By great offers, however, Rudolph succeeded in purchasing the man's silence: he engaged in substance to make over to the landlord a large sum of money, and to marry his daughter, with whom he had long pursued a clandestine intrigue. Agreeably to this arrangement, it was publicly notified that Madame Von Schrollshausen had destroyed herself under a sudden attack of hypochondriasis, to which she had been long subject. Some there were, undoubtedly, who chose to be skeptics on this matter; but nobody had an interest sufficiently deep in the murdered person to prompt him to a legal inquiry.

A fact, which at this time gave Rudolph far more disturbance of mind than the murder of his once beloved wife, was — the full confirmation, upon repeated experience, that his dice had forfeited their power. For he had now been a loser for two days running to so great an extent, that he was obliged to abscond on a misty night. His child, towards whom his affection increased daily, he was under the necessity of leaving with his host as a pledge for his return and fulfilment of his promises. He would not have absconded, if it had been in his power to summon his dark counsellor forthwith: but on account of the great festival of Pentecost, which fell on the very next day, this summons was necessarily delayed for a short time. By staying he would have reduced himself to the necessity of inventing various pretexts for delay, in order to keep up his character with his creditors: whereas, when he returned with a sum of money sufficient to meet his debts, all suspicions would be silenced at once.

In the metropolis of an adjacent territory, to which he resorted so often that he kept lodgings there constantly, he passed Whitsunday with impatience—and resolved on the succeeding night to summon and converse with his counsellor. Impatient, however, as he was of any delay, he did not on that account feel the less anxiety as the hour of midnight approached. Though he was quite alone in his apartments, and had left his servant behind at the baths,—yet long before midnight he fancied that he heard footsteps and whisperings round about him. The purpose he was meditating, that he had regarded till now as a matter of indifference, now displayed itself in its whole monstrous shape. Moreover, he remembered that his wicked counsellor had himself thought it necessary to exhort him to courage, which at present he felt greatly shaken. However, he had no choice. As he was enjoined, therefore, with the last stroke of twelve, he set on fire the wood which lay ready split upon the hearth, and threw the dice into the flames, with a loud laughter that echoed frightfully from the empty hall and staircases. Confused, and half-stifled by the smoke which accompanied the roaring flames, he stood still for a few minutes, when suddenly all the surrounding objects seemed changed, and he found himself transported to his father's house. His father was lying on his death-bed just as he had actually beheld him. He had upon his lips the very same expression of supplication and anguish with which he had at that time striven to address him. Once again he stretched out his arms in love and pity to his son; and once again he seemed to expire in the act.

Schroll was agitated by the picture, which called up and reanimated in his memory, with the power of a mighty tormentor, all his honorable plans and prospects from that innocent period of his life. At this moment, the dice cracked for the first time; and Schroll turned his face towards the flames. A second time the smoke stifled the light, in order to reveal a second picture. He saw himself on the day before the scene of the sand-hill sitting in his dungeon. The clergyman was with him. From the expression of his countenance, he appeared to be just saying—"Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord." Rudolph thought of the disposition in which he then was---of the hopes which the clergyman had raised in him---and of the feeling which he then had that he was still worthy to be reunited to his father, or had become worthy by bitter penitence. The next fracture of the die disturbed the scene—but to substitute one that was not at all more consolatory. For now appeared a den of thieves, in which the unhappy widow of Weber was cursing her children, who—left without support, without counsel, without protection, had taken to evil courses. In the background stood the bleeding father of these ruined children, one hand stretched out towards Schroll with a menacing gesture, and the other lifted towards heaven with a record of impeachment against him.

At the third splitting of the dice, out of the bosom of the smoke arose the figure of his murdered wife, who seemed to chase him from one corner of the room to another, until at length she came and took a seat at the fireplace; by the side of which, as Rudolph now observed with horror, his buried father and the unhappy Weber had stretched themselves; and they carried on together a low and noiseless whispering and moaning that agitated him with a mysterious horror.

After long and hideous visions, Rudolph beheld the flames grow weaker and weaker. He approached. The figures that stood round about held up their hands in a threatening attitude. A moment later, and the time was gone forever; and Rudolph, as his false friend had asserted, was a lost man. With the courage of despair he plunged through the midst of the threatening figures, and snatched at the glowing dice—which were no sooner touched than they split asunder, with a dreadful sound, before which the apparitions vanished in a body.

The evil counsellor appeared on this occasion in the dress of a grave-digger, and asked with a snorting sound—"What wouldst thou from me?"

"I would remind you of your promise," answered Schroll, stepping back with awe: your dice have lost their power."

"Through whose fault?"

Rudolph was silent, and covered his eyes from the withering glance of the fiendish being who was gazing upon him.

"Thy [illegible] desires led thee in chase of the beautiful maiden into the church: my words were forgotten; and the benediction, against which I warned thee, disarmed the dice of their power. In future, observe my directions better."

So saying, he vanished; and Schroll found three new dice upon the hearth.

After such scenes, sleep was not to be thought of; and Rudolph resolved, if possible, to make trial of his dice this very night. The ball at the hotel over the way, to which he had been invited, and from which the steps of the waltzers were still audible, appeared to present a fair opportunity. Thither he repaired; but not without some anxiety, lest some of the noises in his own lodgings should have reached the houses over the way. He was happy to find this fear unfounded. Every thing appeared as if calculated only for *his* senses: for when he inquired with assumed carelessness what great explosion *that* was which occurred about midnight, nobody acknowledged to have heard it.

The dice, also, he was happy to find, answered his expectations. He found a company engaged at play: and by the break of day he had met with so much luck, that he was immediately able to travel back to the baths, and to redeem his child and his word of honor.

In the baths he now made as many new acquaintances as the losses were important which he had lately sustained. He was reputed one of the wealthiest cavaliers in the place; and many who had designs upon him in consequence of this reputed wealth, willingly lost money to him to favor their own schemes; so that, in a single month he gained sums which would have established him as a man of fortune. Under countenance of this repute, and as a widower, no doubt he might now have made successful advances to the young lady whom he had formerly pursued: for her father had an exclusive regard to property, and would have overlooked morals and respectability in any candidate for his daughter's hand. But with the largest offers of money he could not purchase his freedom from the contract made with his landlord's daughter—a woman of very disreputable character. In fact, six months after the death of his first wife, he was married to her.

By the unlimited profusion of money with which his second wife sought to wash out the stains upon her honor, Rudolph's new-raised property was as speedily squandered. To part from her was one of the wishes which lay nearest his heart: he had, however, never ventured to express it a second time before his father-in-law: for on the single occasion when he had hinted at such an intention, that person had immediately broken out into the most dreadful threats. The murder of his first wife was the chain which bound him to his second. The boy whom his f wife had left him, closely as he resembled her in fea and in the bad traits of her character, was his only ort—if, indeed, his gloomy and perturbed mind wo allow him at any time to taste of comfort.

To preserve this boy from the evil influences of the many bad examples about him, he had already made an agreement with a man of distinguished abilities, who was to have superintended his education in his own family. But all was frustrated. Madame Von Schrollshausen, whose love of pomp and display led her eagerly to catch at every pretext for creating a *fête*, had invited a party on the evening before the young boy's intended departure. The time which was not occupied in the eating-room was spent at the gaming-table, and dedicated to the dice, of whose extraordinary powers the owner was at this time avail-ing himself with more zeal than usual—having just invested all his disposable money in the purchase of a landed estate. One of the guests having lost very considerable sums in an uninterrupted train of ill luck, threw the dice, in his vexation, with such force upon the table, that one of them fell down. The attendants searched for it on the floor; and the child also crept about in quest of it: not finding it, he rose; and, in rising, stepped upon it, lost his balance, and fell with such violence against the edge of the stove—that he died in a few hours of the injury inflicted on the head.

This accident made the most powerful impression upon the father. He recapitulated the whole of his life from the first trial he had made of the dice. From them had arisen all his misfortunes. In what way could he liberate himself from their accursed influence?—Revolving this point, and in the deepest distress of mind, Schroll wandered out towards nightfall, and strolled through the town. Coming to a solitary bridge in the outskirts, he looked down from the battlements upon the gloomy depths of the waters below, which seemed to regard him with looks of sympathy and strong fascination. "So be it then!" he exclaimed, and sprang over the railing. But, instead of finding his grave in the waters, he felt himself below seized powerfully by the grasp of a man—whom, from his scornful laugh, he recognised as his evil counsellor. The man bore him to the shore, and said—"No, no, my good friend: he that once enters into a league with me—him I shall deliver from death even in his own despite."

Half crazy with despair, the next morning Schroll crept out of the town with a loaded pistol. Spring was abroad—spring flowers, spring breezes, and nightingales:* they were all abroad, but not for *him* or *his* delight. A crowd of itinerant tradesmen passed him, who were on their road to a neighboring fair. One of them, observing his dejected countenance with pity, attached himself to his side, and asked him in a tone of sympathy what was the matter. Two others of the passers-by Schroll heard distinctly saying—"Faith, I should not like for my part to walk alone with such an ill-looking fellow." He darted a furious glance at the men, separated from his pitying companion with a fervent pressure of his hand, and struck off into a solitary track of the forest. In the first retired spot, he fired the pistol: and behold! the man who had spoken to him with so much kindness lies stretched in his blood, and he himself is without a wound. At this moment, while staring half-unconsciously at the face of the murdered man, he feels himself seized from behind. Already he seems to himself in the hands of the public executioner. Turning round, however, he hardly knows whether to feel pleasure or pain on seeing his evil suggester in the dress of a grave-digger. "My friend," said the grave-digger, "if you cannot be content to wait for death until I send it, I must be forced to end with dragging you to *that* from which I began by saving you—a public execution. But think not thus, or by any other way, to escape me. After death, thou wilt assuredly be mine again."

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* It may be necessary to inform some readers, who have never lived far enough to the south to have any personal knowledge of the nightingale, that this bird sings in the daytime as well as the night.

"Who, then," said the unhappy man, "who is the murderer of the poor traveller?"

"Who? why, who but yourself? was it not yourself that fired the pistol?"

"Ay; but at my own head."

The fiend laughed in a way that made Schroll's flesh creep on his bones. "Understand this, friend, that he whose fate I hold in my hands cannot anticipate it by his own act. For the present, begone, if you would escape the scaffold. To oblige you once more, I shall throw a veil over this murder."

Thereupon, the grave-digger set about making a grave for the corpse, whilst Schroll wandered away—more for the sake of escaping the hideous presence in which he stood, than with any view to his own security from punishment.

Seeing by accident a prisoner under arrest at the guard-house, Schroll's thoughts reverted to his own confinement. "How happy," said he, "for me and for Charlotte—had I then refused to purchase life on such terms, and had better laid to heart the counsel of my good spiritual adviser!"—Upon this a sudden thought struck him—that he would go and find out the old clergyman, and would unfold to him his wretched history and situation. He told his wife that some private affairs required his attendance for a few days at the town of ———. But, say what he would, he could not prevail on her to desist from accompanying him.

On the journey, his chief anxiety was, lest the clergyman, who was already advanced in years at the memorable scene of the sand hill, might now be dead. But, at the very entrance of the town, he saw him walking in the street, and immediately felt himself more composed in mind than he had done for years. The venerable appearance of the old man confirmed him still more in his resolution of making a full disclosure to him of his whole past life: one only transaction, the murder of his first wife, he thought himself justified in concealing; since, with all his penitence for it, that act was now beyond the possibility of reparation.

For a long time, the pious clergyman refused all belief to Schroll's narrative; but being at length convinced that he had a wounded spirit to deal with, and not a disordered intellect, he exerted himself to present all those views of religious consolation which his philanthropic character and his long experience suggested to him as likely to be effectual. Eight days' conversation with the clergyman restored Schroll to the hopes of a less miserable future. But the good man admonished him at parting to put away from himself whatsoever could in any way tend to support his unhallowed connexion.

In this direction, Schroll was aware that the dice were included: and he resolved firmly that his first measure on returning home should be to bury in an inaccessible place these accursed implements, that could not but bring mischief to every possessor. On entering the inn, he was met by his wife, who was in the highest spirits, and laughing profusely. He inquired the cause. "No," said she: "you refused to communicate your motive for coming hither, and the nature of your business for the last week: I, too, shall have my mysteries. As to your leaving me in solitude at an inn, *that* is a sort of courtesy which marriage naturally brings with it: but that you should have travelled hither for no other purpose than that of trifling away your time in the company of an old tedious parson, *that* (you will allow me to say) is a caprice which seems scarcely worth the money it will cost."

"Who, then, has told you that I have passed my time with an old parson?" said the astonished Schroll.

"Who told me? Why, just let me know what your business was with the parson, and I'll let you know, in turn, who it was that told me. So much I will assure you, however, now—that the cavalier who was my informant is a thousand times handsomer, and a more interesting companion, than an old dotard who is standing at the edge of the grave."

All the efforts of Madame Von Schrollshausen to irritate the curiosity of her husband proved ineffectual to draw from him his secret. The next day, on their return homewards, she repeated her attempts. But he parried them all with firmness. A more severe trial to his firmness was prepared for him in the heavy bills which his wife presented to him on his reaching home. Her expenses in clothes and in jewels had been so profuse, that no expedient remained to Schroll but that of selling, without delay, the landed estate he had so lately purchased. A declaration to this effect was very ill received by his wife. "Sell the estate?" said she: "what, sell the sole resource I shall have to rely on when you are dead? And for what reason, I should be glad to know; when a very little of the customary luck of your dice will enable you to pay off these trifles? And whether the bills be paid to-day or to-morrow cannot be of any very great importance." Upon this, Schroll declared with firmness that he never meant to play again. "Not play again!"

exclaimed his wife, "pooh! pooh! you make me blush for you! So, then, I suppose it's all true, as was said, that scruples of conscience drove you to the old rusty parson? and that he enjoined, as a penance, that you should abstain from gaming? I was told as much: but I refused to believe it; for, in your circumstances, the thing seemed too senseless and irrational."

"My dear girl," said Schroll, "consider"—

"Consider! what's the use of considering? what is there to consider about?" interrupted Madame Von Schrollshausen: and, recollecting the gay cavalier whom she had met at the inn, she now, for the first time, proposed a separation herself. "Very well," said her husband, "I am content." "So am I," said his father-in-law, who joined them at that moment. "But take notice that, first of all, I must have paid over to me an adequate sum of money for the creditable support of my daughter: else"——

Here he took Schroll aside; and the old threat of revealing the murder so utterly disheartened him, that at length, in despair, he consented to his terms.

Once more, therefore, the dice were to be tried; but only for the purpose of accomplishing the separation: *that* over, Schroll resolved to seek a livelihood in any other way, even if it were as a day laborer. The stipulated sum was at length all collected within a few hundred dollars; and Schroll was already looking out for some old disused well into which he might throw the dice, and then have it filled up: for even a river seemed to him a hiding place not sufficiently secure for such instruments of misery.

Remarkable it was, on the very night when the last arrears were to be obtained of his father-in-law's demand,—a night which Schroll had anticipated with so much bitter anxiety,—that he became unusually gloomy and dejected. He was particularly disturbed by the countenance of a stranger, who, for several days running, had lost considerable sums. The man called himself Stutz; but he had a most striking resemblance to his old comrade, Weber, who had been shot at the sand-hill; and differed indeed in nothing but in the advantage of blooming youth. Scarcely had he leisure to recover from the shock which this spectacle occasioned, when a second occurred. About midnight, another man, whom nobody knew, came up to the gaming-table—and interrupted the play by recounting an event which he represented as having just happened. A certain man, he said, had made a covenant with some person or other, that they call the Evil One—or what is it you call him? and by means of this covenant he had obtained a steady run of good luck at play.

"Well, sir (he went on), and, would you believe it, the other day he began to repent of this covenant; my gentleman wanted to rat,—he wanted to rat, sir. Only, first of all, he resolved privately to make up a certain sum of money. Ah! the poor idiot! he little knew whom he had to deal with: the Evil One, as they choose to call him, was not a man to let himself be swindled in that manner. No, no, my good friend. I saw—I mean, the Evil One saw—what was going on betimes; and he secured the swindler just as he fancied himself on the point of pocketing the last arrears of the sum wanted."

The company began to laugh so loudly at this pleasant fiction, as they conceived it, that Madame Von Schrollshausen was attracted from the adjoining room. The story was repeated to her: and she was the more delighted with it, because in the relater she recognised the gay cavalier whom she had met at the inn. Everybody laughed again, excepting two persons—Stutz and Schroll. The first had again lost all the money in his purse; and the second was so confounded by the story, that he could not forbear staring with fixed eyes on the stranger, who stood over against him. His consternation increased when he perceived that the stranger's countenance seemed to alter at every moment; and that nothing remained unchanged in it, except the cold expression of inhuman scorn with which he perseveringly regarded himself.

At length, he could endure this no longer: and he remarked, therefore, upon Stutz's again losing a bet, that it was now late; that Mr. Stutz was too much in a run of bad luck; and that, on these accounts, he would defer the further pursuit of their play until another day. And, thereupon, he put the dice into his pocket.

"Stop!" said the strange cavalier! and the voice froze Schroll with horror; for he knew too well to whom that dreadful tone, and those fiery eyes, belonged.

"Stop!" he said again: "produce your dice!" And tremblingly Schroll threw them upon the table.

"Ah! I thought as much," said the stranger; "they are loaded dice!" So saying, he called for a hammer, and struck one of them in two. "See!" said he to Stutz, holding out to him the broken dice, which, in fact, seemed loaded with lead. "Stop, vile impostor!" exclaimed the young man, as Schroll was preparing to quit the room in the greatest confusion; and he threw the dice at him, one of which lodged in his right eye. The tumult increased; the police came in; and Stutz was apprehended, as Schroll's wound assumed a very dangerous appearance.

Next day, Schroll was in a violent fever. He asked repeatedly for Stutz. But Stutz had been committed to close confinement; it having been found that he had travelled with false passes. He now confessed that he was one of the sons of the mutineer Weber; that his sickly mother had died soon after his father's execution; and that himself and his brother, left without the control of guardians, and without support, had taken to bad courses.

On hearing this report, Schroll rapidly worsened; and he unfolded to a young clergyman his whole unfortunate history. About midnight, he sent again in great haste for the clergyman He came: but, at sight of him, Schroll stretched out his hands in extremity of horror, and waved him away from his presence; but, before his signals were complied with, the wretched man had expired in convulsions.

From this horror at the sight of the young clergyman, and from the astonishment of the clergyman himself, on arriving and hearing that he had already been seen in the sick-room, it was inferred that his figure had been assumed for fiendish purposes. The dice and the strange cavalier disappeared at the same time with their wretched victim; and were seen no more

THE GORED HUNTSMAN.

If thou be hurt with hart,
It brings thee to thy bier;
But barber's hand will boar's hurt heal,
Thereof thou need'st not fear. *Old Rhyme.*

The night was drawing on apace. The evening mist, as it arose from the ground, began to lose its thin white wreaths in the deep shadows of the woods. Kochenstein, separated from his companions of the chase, and weary with his unsuccessful efforts to rejoin them, became more and more desirous of discovering in what direction his route lay. But there was no track visible, at least by that uncertain and lessening light, the mazes of which could guide him to his home. He raised his silver-mouthed bugle to his lips, and winded a loud and sustained blast. A distant echo plaintively repeated the notes. The Baron listened for other answer with the attention his situation required, but in vain.

"This will never do," said he, casting the reins on his horse's neck: "see, good Reinzaum, if thy wit can help thy master at this pinch; it has done so before now." The animal seemed to understand and appreciate the confidence placed in him. Pricking up his before drooping ears, and uttering a wild neigh, he turned from the direction his rider had hitherto pursued, and commenced a new rout at an animated trot. For awhile the path promised well; the narrow defile, down which it lay between rows of gigantic larch and twisted oaks, seemed manifestly intended to conduct to some more extended opening. But on reaching its termination the horse suddenly stopped. The glimmering light that yet remained just enabled the Baron to perceive the impervious enclosure of thickly planted trees, that surrounded the little, natural amphitheatre at which he had arrived.

"This is worse and worse, Reinzaum," exclaimed the disappointed rider, as he cast a disconsolate glance upwards. There was not a single star visible, to diminish the deep gloom in which the woods were enveloped. "Guetiger himmel! that I should be lost in my own barony, and not a barelegged schelm to point out my road!"

Weary of remaining in one spot, he rode round the enclosure in which he found himself thus unpleasantly placed. He repeated the same exercise, gazing wistfully on every side, though the darkness was now almost too great to discover to him the massy trunks, under the branches of which he rode. At length he stopped suddenly.

"Is that a light," said he inwardly, "that glimmers through the—no, 't is gone. Ach Gott! it comes again! If I could but reach it!"

Again he winded his horn, and followed the blast with a most potent halloo. His labor was in vain, the light remained stationary. The Baron began to swear. He had been educated at Wurtzburg, and for a Swabian swore in excellent German.

He was perplexed whether to remain where he was, with this provoking light before him, and the probable chance of remaining all night in the woods; or to abandon his steed, and endeavor to penetrate through the trees to the spot whence the light issued. Neither of these alternatives was precisely to his liking. In the former case he must abide the cold air and damp mist till morning; in the other he incurred the risk of losing his steed, should he not be able to retrace his way to the spot. Indecision however was not the fault of his character; and, after a minute's hesitation, he sprung from his horse, fastened him to a tree, and began to explore the wood in the direction of the light.

The difficulties he encountered were not few. The Baron was a portly personage and occasionally found a difficulty in squeezing through interstices, where a worse fed man would have passed ungrazed. Briers and thorns were not wanting, and the marshy ground completed the catalogue of annoyances. The Baron toiled and toiled, extricating first one leg and then the other from the deep entanglement in which each was by turns plunged, while the object of his attention seemed as distant as ever. His patience was exhausted. Many and emphatic were the figures of his inward rhetoric. Of one fact he became convinced, that all the evil influences of the stars had this night conspired to concentrate their power on one unlucky wight, and that this wight was no other than the Baron Von Kochenstein.

But the Baron was not a man to be easily diverted from his purpose, and he labored amain. His hands were bruised with the branches he had torn down when they impeded his course, and the heat drops on his brow, raised by his exertions, mixed with the chill and heavy night dew that fell around him. At length a desperate effort, almost accompanied with the loss of his boots, placed him free from the morass through which he had waded. He stamped and shook his feet when on dry land with the satisfaction that such a deliverance inspires. To add to his joy, he perceived, that the light he had so painfully sought was not more than fifty ells distant.

A moment or two brought him to the door of a low dwelling over-shadowed by a beetling, penthouse-like roof. As far as he could discern, the building was of considerable antiquity. The portal was of stone, and the same material composed the frames of the windows, which were placed far from the ground, and from which proceeded the light he had sought.

Our huntsman lost little time in applying to the door, at first with a gentle knock, which being disregarded increased to a thundering reverberation of blows. The gentle and the rude knocks were of equal avail. He desisted from his occupation to listen awhile, but not a sound met his ear.

"This is strange, by the mass," said the Baron: "the house must be inhabited, else whence the light? And though they slept like the seven sleepers, my blows must have aroused them. Let us try another mode—the merry horn must awaken them, if aught can move their sluggish natures." And once more resorting to his bugle he sounded a réveillée. A jolly cheering note it would have been at another time, but in the middle of the dull night it seemed most unfit. A screech owl's note would have harmonised better.

"I hear them now," said he of the bugle, "praised be the saints." On this as on other occasions, however, the saints got more thanks than their due. An old raven disturbed by the Baron's notes, flapping her wings in flight, had deceived his ears. She was unseen in the congenial darkness, but her hoarse croakings filled the air as she flew.

Irritated at the delay, the Baron made a formal declaration of war. In as loud a voice as he could he demanded entrance, and threatened in default of accordance to break open the door. A loud laugh as from a dozen revellers was the immediate reply.

A piece of the trunk of a young tree lay near the Baron; he took it up and dashed it with all his strength against the door. It was a mighty blow, but, though the very building shook before it, the strong gate yielded not.

Before Kochenstein could repeat the attack, a hoarse voice, seemingly proceeding from one of the windows, greeted his ears.

"Begone with thy noise," it said, "else I will loose the dog on thee."

"I will break the hound's neck, and diminish his caitiff master by the head, if thou open not the door this instant. What! is this the way to treat a benighted traveller? Open, I say, and quickly."

It seemed that the inmate was about to put his threat in execution for the low deep growl of a wolf-dog was the only answer to the Baron's remonstrance. He drew his short hunting sword and planted himself firmly before the door. He waited awhile, but all was silent.

He had again recourse to his battering ram. The door resisted marvellously, but it became evident, that it could not long withstand such a siege. As the strong oak cracked and groaned, the Baron redoubled his efforts. At length the voice he had before heard again accosted him.

"Come in, then, if thou wilt. Fool! to draw down thy fate on thee." The bolts were undrawn. "Lift up the latch."

The Baron troubled not himself to inquire the meaning of the ominous words of the speaker, but obeyed the direction given, and entered. He found himself in a spacious apartment that appeared to comprise the whole tenement. He looked around for the foes he expected to meet, and started back with astonishment.

The only occupant of the apartment was a lady, the rich elegance of whose dress would have attracted admiration, had not that feeling been engrossed by her personal loveliness. Her white silken garment clung to a form modelled to perfection, and was fastened at her waist by a diamond clasp of singular shape, for it represented a couchant stag. A similar ornament confined the long tresses of her hair, the jetty blackness of which was as perfect as the opposite hue of the brow they shaded. Her face was somewhat pale, and her features melancholy, but of exquisitely tender beauty.

She arose, as the Baron entered, from the velvet couch on which she was seated, and with a slight but courteous smile motioned him to a seat opposite to her own. A table was ready spread by its side, laden with refreshments. He explained the cause of his coming, and apologized with great fervency for his rude mode of demanding admission.

"You are welcome," said the lady again, pointing to the vacant seat. Nothing could be more ordinary than these three words, but the sound of her voice thrilled through the hearer's sense into his soul. She resumed her seat, and Kochenstein took the place offered him. He gazed around, and was convinced, to his amazement, that they were alone. Whence then the voice, with which he had held converse? and whence the uproarious laugh, which had first assailed his hearing? There could not, he felt certain, be another chamber under that roof capable of containing such a number of laughers. The dog too, whose savage growl had put him on his guard, where was he?——

The Baron was however too genuine a huntsman, to suffer either surprise or admiration to prevent him from doing justice to the excellent meal before him, and to which his hostess invited him, declining however to partake with her guest. He eat and drank therefore, postponing his meditations, except an anxious thought on the situation of his steed. "Poor Reinzaum," thought he, thou wilt suffer for my refreshment. A warm stable were fitter by far for thee than the midnight damps that chill thee." And the Baron looked with infinite satisfaction on the blazing hearth, the ruddy gleams of which almost eclipsed the softer light of the brilliant lamp that hung from the ceiling.

As his appetite became satisfied, his curiosity revived. Once or twice as he raised his eyes he met the bright black ones of his entertainer. They were beautiful; yet, without knowing why, the Baron shrunk from their glance. They had not the pensive softness of her features. The expression was one he could not divine, but would not admit that he feared.

He filled his goblet, and in the most courteous terms drank the lady's health. She bowed her head in acknowledgement, and held to him a small golden cup richly chased. The Baron filled it,—she drank to him, though but wetting her lip with the liquor. She replaced the cup and rose from her seat.

"This room," she said, "must be your lodging for the night Other I cannot offer you.—Farewell."

The Baron was about to speak. She interrupted him. "I know what you would say—Yes, we *shall* meet again. Take this flower," she added, breaking a rose from a wreath that twined among her hair in full bloom, though September had commenced, and the flowers of the gardens and the fields were long since dead, "take this flower. On the day that it fades you see me once more." She opened a small door in the wainscoting, hitherto unseen by the Baron, and closed it after her before he could utter a word.

The Baron felt no disposition to sleep, and paced about the room revolving the events of the evening. The silence of the hour was favorable to such an employment, and the soft carpets that covered the floor prevented even his own footsteps from being heard.

Wearied with his fruitless ruminations, he was beginning to relieve himself from his lonely want of occupation, by taking note more minutely than before of the handsome though antique furniture of the apartment, when his attention was claimed by the sounds of a harp. A few bars only had been played, when the music was sweetened by a voice the softest he had ever heard.

The words of the song applied too strikingly to himself to escape his ear.

Wo to him, whose footsteps rude
Break my fairy solitude;
Wo to him, whose fated grasp
Dares undo my portal clasp;
Wo to him, whose rash advance
Dooms him to my blighting glance;
In the greenwood shall he lie,
On the bloody heather die.

The voice and music ceased together, leaving the Baron oppressed with unwonted fears. "And I must see her again! would this rose would bloom forever!" He seated himself, and ere long he fell into a troubled sleep.

When he awoke, the ashes on the hearth were sparkless, and the morning, casting away her gray mantle, was beginning to dart her gayer beams through the narrow windows. He perceived, with surprise, that the door through which his hostess had retired was ajar, yet she was not in the apartment, and from the situation in which he had sat she could not have passed through the door by which he had entered.. He arose, and walked about with as much noise as he could make, with the object of apprising the lady of the dwelling, that the wainscot door was open. After continuing this for a length of time his curiosity increased. He ventured to look through the doorway. It opened into a small closet, which was entirely empty.

He had already witnessed too much to feel any great additional astonishment at this discovery. "Besides," said he to himself, "her words spoke but of a meeting at a future day Why therefore should I expect her now?"——

He opened the entrance door, and found his horse, which he had left tied in the wood, ready for departure, and apparently in excellent condition.. "Woman or witch," he exclaimed, "I owe her a good turn for this—Now, Reinzaum, keep up thy credit." And springing on his horse's back he pursued a track, that seemed to lead in the direction he wished; and without aid of whip or spur was at Kochenstein in an hour.

His first act was to place the rose in a vase of water. Day by day he visited it, and found its bloom unabated. Three months passed away without any visible alteration in the beauty of the flower. The Baron became less sensible of the remembrances connected with it, and gazed on it with indifference. He even displayed it to the inmates of his castle, and among others, to his only daughter, the death of whose mother had left Kochenstein a widower. Frederica was in her seventh year, and within a few days of its completion. To her earnest intreaties for the flower, her father promised it should be hers on her birthday. The child was overjoyed at the idea of a present, to which much importance was attached in her eyes, for the ever-blooming rose was the talk of the whole castle; and every human creature in it, except its lord, offered many conjectures respecting the flower, all very ingenious, and all very absurd.

On the morning of his daughter's birthday the rose was dead. The Baron Von Kochenstein, though a man of courage and thirty-two quarterings, changed color when he beheld the faded flower. Without speaking a word he mounted Reinzaum, and galloped off at the rate of four German miles an hour.

He had ridden some half hour, when he saw before him a stag, the finest he had ever beheld. It was prancing on the frosty ground, and throwing aloft its many-tined antlers in proud disdain of the meaner brutes of the earth. At the approach of the Baron, it fled. In pure distraction of spirits, and in that dread of his own thoughts, which prompts a man to any thing to avoid himself, Kochenstein pursued, though unattended by a single hound. The stag seemed wind-footed. Reinzaum followed like a noble horse as he was.

Through glade and copse, over hill and plain, the Baron chased the lordly stag. At length it abated its speed near the side of a transparent pool, in the midst of which a fountain threw up its beautiful column of waters. The stag halted, and turned to gaze on its pursuer.. For the first time Kochenstein applied his spur to the quivering flank of his steed, and grasped his hunting sword. A moment brought him to the side of the quarry. ere another had elapsed, a stroke from its branching antlers brought him to the ground. The steed fled in dismay. In vain did Kochenstein endeavor to avert his impending fate. With all the strength of terror he grasped the left horn of the stag, as it bended against its prostrate victim. The struggle was but for an instant, and a branch of the other antler pierced the Baron's side.

No sooner was the stroke inflicted, than the rage which had possessed the stag seemed wholly abated. It offered not to trample on the defenceless man, or to repeat the blow. Gazing awhile on its work it turned away, plunged into the waters of the fountain, and was lost from sight in the overwhelming flood.

Enfeebled as he was, for the blood gushed in torrents from his side, the Baron half raised himself up to look on the closing waters. Something in the stag's gaze awoke associations, that carried his mind back to the events of a few months ago. While he gazed on the fountain, the column of its jet divided, then sunk, and ceased to play. A figure appeared from the midst. It glided across the pool and approached the Baron. A lady stood beside him. She was clad in robes of white, and her head was girt with a wreath of faded flowers. Her left brow was spotted with recent blood. The Baron shuddered at her glance, still more at her voice, for he knew too well the soft tone in which she sang these lines.

To my plighted promise true,
Once again I meet thy view;
Now my garland's roses fade,
And thy rashness' debt is paid.
Sad the fate, and dark the doom,
That led thee to my secret home:
In the greenwood thou art lying,
On the bloody heather dying!

The last sounds mingled with the rush of the fountain as it rose again, when, retreating on the waters, the songstress sank into their embrace. Her last notes had fallen on the ears of the Baron. The rush of the waters was unheard by him; for when the song ceased, he was no more.—*The Keepsake.*

THE NIKKUR HOLL.

In one of the outer Skerries of the Shetland Islands there dwelt many years ago, two fishermen, who, from their having both been left when young without parents or protectors, had formed an intimacy which subsisted throughout their lives. By their joint exertions they had managed to possess themselves of a boat, which led to a mutual good will or partnership, extending itself over all their other property in trade; for, as each inherited the cabin of his ancestors, there were two separate domestic establishments, though these existed more in appearance than reality. The difference in the ages of this pair was not great, but their persons and tempers were as unlike as a sealgh and a sillock. Petie Winwig was a thickset, Dutch-built, heavy-headed calf, with a broad, swollen, grinning countenance. His cheeks rose like two lumps of blubber on each side of his nose, almost concealing that, as well as his little eyes, when he laughed. A perpetual smile of good humour and acquiescence sat upon his face, and his well fattened limbs and body showed that care and discontent never prevented his stomach's doing its duty in an able manner. If, instead of having been born in this needy land, he had been the son of an English trader, he would have become one of those sleek, oily, fullbottomed swabbers, whom I have seen marching down Wapping High Street as if they were heaving an anchor at every step; and who, when they come aboard to look after stores, oblige us to lay a double plank from the quay to the gangway, for fear they should snap a good two inch deal asunder with their weight.

"Ay!" said Captain Shafton, "I know one who could raise a ton at least—perhaps you have seen him—old Fodder?"

"Fat Fodder!" cried Shipley, laughing, "I know him well—they say he measures three yards round the waist. I have seen the watermen refuse to take him across the river, for fear of swamping their boats. I wanted him to let them tow him astern, like a dead fish, for there would be no fear of his sinking."

"I can tell you a merry jest of old Fodder," said the first mate, "if you'll put me in mind of him another night—at present I'll continue the laird's story."

Petie Winwig was not only fat, he was lazy and sleepy; and, had not his station compelled him to daily exertions and nocturnal watchings, he would have been the greatest though the most harmless drone in the islands. On the other hand, his associate and partner was a perfect wasp, both in appearance and activity. He was "a lean and hungry looking" rogue, a complete "spare Cassius" in his way. His figure was tall and bony, with a length of arm fit for a king, and an eye as quick as a "donkey's." His looks were prying and inquisitive, and the shrewdness of his features was greatly heightened by a long and hooked nose, which obtained for him amongst his countrymen, who had been, (as most of them have,) in the Greenland seas, the designation of the Mallemak.* This title he indeed well sustained, for he was as rapacious, and as constantly on the wing, as that unwearied bird; but he might as justly have been called a Solan, or a pelican, for if he could not poise himself in the air and plunge down, like one of them on a shoal of fishes, he knew no bounds to his desire to obtain them; nor would the possession of all the inhabitants of the deep have satisfied his covetousness. His real name was Daniel, but he was most commonly called Spiel Trosk, the hardest driver of a bargain who ever brought goods to Lerwick; and, if he did not openly cheat and delude his customers, it was only because he had not been brought up according to the newest and most liberal system of education. He was, indeed, as much in the dark in this particular, as if he had lived through the whole of one of the dark ages, and though Petie Winwig, his comrade, as well from indolence as from stupidity, never questioned his dealings, but left the management of the money entirely in his hands without suspicion, he was not enlightened enough to think of swindling him. This ignorance was indeed deplorable; for Petie preferred sitting in doors, making fishing lines and mending nets, to plying in the market, and was, besides, fully convinced both of his own incapacity for business, and of his companion's talents; so that, but for this want of illumination, Spiel might have bilked him out of the profits of their mutual labors. There were, however, no unfair dealings between them, but, on the contrary, perfect confidence and friendship. They tilled one plot of ground, and sowed it with the same seed: they assisted each other in digging peat, and in making or repairing every shed or utensil which the necessities of either required; and they knew no need of asking when they wished to borrow. In fact, the division of their huts was the only distinction that existed between them, and as these were situated close together, on a slope lying under the lee of a rocky hill, apart from the rest of the village, this separation was merely nominal.

To their lonely and isolated situation may perhaps be traced the commencement of their union; and in such islands, where every want beyond the capacity of the individual to supply, must be obviated by the assistance of a neighbor, close intimacies must necessarily be produced. Similarity of temper and inclination may be essential to matrimonial connexions, but the friendships of either sex exist most strongly between those of different dispositions and pursuits; and he who considers that jealousy, envy, and avarice, are the rocks on which most friendships are wrecked, will not be at a loss for the cause.

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* Pronounced "Mollymawk."

The love of gain, which Spiel Trosk nourished as the dearest affection of his heart, increased, like all other inordinate desires, in strength and magnitude, till it became a monster. He grew discontented with the spare profits of his occupation, a creel of sillocks brought him but a trifle, hundreds of ling and tusk were sold without filling his purse, and the mittens and caps, which he and Petie knitted at spare hours, or whilst watching their lines, hardly repaid the cost and the labor, and to dig and carry peat was absolute waste of time.—In fact, his thoughts were directed towards obtaining large sums of money, such as he had heard were amassed by the southrons, whose ships passed occasionally before his eyes. He had sailed in a Greenlandman, in his youth, and he now dreamed of the wealth the owner must have possessed to fit out such a vessel; he thought of the shoals of bottle-noses he had seen killed in his native *voes*, and he calculated the produce which the laird had enjoyed—Money became the only theme of his thoughts, his idol, and he might be said to worship Mammon in his heart. At length he became possessed with a strange idea, he fancied that he was destined to be rich—not rich like Magnus Horrick, the fish salter, who traded to Spain; nor like Davis Steinson, the spirit dealer; but rich as Gilbert Maclure of Leith, who, it was said, could buy all Shetland; or as a merchant of London, whose ships came yearly to Lerwick, on their way to the whale fishery, and returned, in their homeward course, laden with the ransom of a monarch.

For some time the idea which Spiel had conceived, of his approaching state of affluence, was of great benefit to the firm of Winwig and Trosk; for the fisherman had believed that his riches were to be the result of unparaleled exertion and success. He had accordingly become more energetic than ever, and he began to attract much notice at this period, from his constantly going about in search of gain. He knew no rest by land or by sea, his nets and his lines were always in the water, and his fish were never wanting in the market. Petie now was of greater importance than he had ever been before, and his hours were well engaged in netting and twisting lines; for Spiel had doubled his demand for tackle, and employed two sets of fishing gear instead of one.

But it was not from fish only that Trosk expected to obtain his wealth; he became a speculator, and at the close of the summer bought the surplus grain of his neighbors, and added it to an extraordinary quantity which he and Winwig had raised by their own exertions. This he intended to carry in his boat to the surrounding islands, when corn might be dear, and he talked of stretching over to Orkney, if he could hear of a good market. At the departure and return of the Greenland fleet, he was one of the most diligent visiters to the vessels in Brassa Sound, whither he always repaired in due time, with lambs, poultry, eggs, mittens, hose, and every other saleable commodity; but, unlike his brethren, instead of preferring to receive the value of his merchandise in meal, split pease, and pieces of beef or pork, he would never part even with a muscle unless for money, for the only delight he knew was the possession of cash

Another source of revenue to the firm was down, collected during those times when the weather rendered fishing impracticable, and Spiel was soon known as the most adventurous climber amongst precipices who had ever plundered a nest. Even the eagles of Sumburgh were not safe from his depredations, when engaged in scaling the heights of the mountains—no man could strike down a shag or a gannet like the Skerry fisherman, nor could any one boast of having killed so many wild swans.

With all his diligence and dexterity, after a year and a half spent in anxious labor and peril, Trosk found that the accumulated profits of twice fifty such terms, would not produce the wealth he had allotted to himself in his dream of avarice; and, instead of questioning the justness of his impression that he was to become rich, he concluded that some strange and unprecedented good fortune was to befall him. This fancy wrought in the mind of Spiel till he could not contain it, and it was spread abroad through the medium of Winwig, who, finding his friend did not mean to make it a secret, took delight in telling what he began to believe as truth, for his opinion of Trosk's sagacity was great, and his own weakness of mind was not trifling. To the simple declaration which Petiė made, the neighbors added their own comments, and incorporated them with the text. It was said, that Spiel had been visited by his infernal majesty himself, who had offered to make him a rich man, on certain conditions, and that only the consent of the fisherman was wanting to render him wealthy. Several even recollected the time of the proposal, and were almost sure they had seen the evil one pull the latch of the cottage, and enter during a storm. A description of the Devil became familiar with the gossips of the Skerries, and from thence found its way to Lerwick; and at length "Mess John, the pastor," made some allusion to it in the kirk on a Sunday. Others had a different way of accounting for the foretold riches of the fisherman. He was the orphan of an orphan, and that was sufficient to ensure him luck. This assertion, however, did not contain enough of the wonderful to give general satisfaction; and, accordingly some declared that Trosk had discovered the means of propitiating the lost race of brownies, and of obtaining their long withheld kindness; while still another party said, that the prophet, who had predicted the future riches of the fisherman, was a being without name or description, which had risen up from the bottom of the sea one moonlight night, when Spiel pulled his line, thinking he had hooked a large fish, and which had told him explicitly, that he should possess more pieces of gold than he had ground "aits in the mull."

Which of these reports is correct, is not for me to state, but an occurrence soon took place which induced Spiel Trosk to believe and hope in secret, that that portion of them which referred to the quantity of gold he should amass would prove correct. It is one of the attributes of superstition to give credit to relations which are totally at variance with our own experience and knowledge, provided they promise something improbable and supernatural; and, although the fisherman at first declared that he had neither seen the devil, nor propitiated a brownie, nor fished up a demon from the depth of the ocean, he suddenly altered his manner, and hinted that the report of his having communication with beings of another world was not altogether without foundation.

The desire of wealth, which at first had prompted Spiel to exert every muscle in the pursuit of profitable occupations, now rose to a height which rendered it, like all other overstrained passions, injurious to its entertainer. By his unrivalled diligence and foresight, and the obedience and docility of Petie, Trosk and Winwig were already spoken of as the most flourishing fishermen within the isles. On them Magnus Horrick, the mighty fish curer, depended for a greater supply than on any four others, and from their nets and lines the gastronomes of Lerwick obtained the choicest offerings of the seas. Their fame, too, began to be attached to other articles of commerce; Spiel had disposed of his barley and oats with great success, having carried them to the neighboring isles at a season when they were greatly needed, for which the laird of Calk had presented him with a fizgig or small harpoon.

Petie's mittens and caps were in great esteem amongst traders and sailors, and were thought equal to those of Fair Isle, and their boat was always welcome alongside of every ship in the sound, since, as I have said, they were not civilized enough to know how to cheat. In this thriving condition, when they were considered as the most monied men in the Skerries; and had contracted for more land for raising barley, and feeding sheep and horses, than any other tenants of the laird, Spiel Trosk became discontented, and possessed with the belief that his riches were to be the result of some fortuitous circumstance. His mind grew uneasy and anxious, and instead of wearing the air of an active man of business, with a keen and decisive glance of the eye, he showed the restless and haggard countenance of a person bereft of his property. He began to prowl and roam about now, more in hopes of meeting with the gifts of chance, than in pursuit of any determined object, and his looks grew rapacious from avarice, and angry from disappointment; still he did not neglect any of his former occupations, though he performed them with less alacrity of spirit and gratification than before; but he was wont to fall into reveries and calculations upon the nature of the event which was to fill up the measure of his covetousness, if, indeed, such a desire can be satiated.

Dangerous is the precipice that hangs over the gulf of futurity, and fearful is his situation who attempts to look steadily down it. The meditations of the fisherman, on the possibility of gaining money without labor, gave birth to strange fancies and desires in his mind. The gossip of the old women often recurred to his thoughts, and when at night the wind whistled around his cabin, and the sea poured into the *voe* near which it was situated, and broke among the rocks, his ear listened, almost without his consent, for some unusual and portentous sound. What it was he expected to hear, or to behold, he knew not, and wished not to think, but the heavy pattering of rain often sounded to him like footsteps, and when a gust shook his door, he looked at the latch, with the fixed yet haggard eye of one who firmly awaits the arrival of a terrible visiter.

The mind of Spiel was likewise perpetually disturbed by the recurrence of a singular circumstance, whenever he sought repose on his pillow. At the moment of dropping off to sleep, he was awakened by a word whispered in his ear, which notwithstanding all his endeavors, he could not perfectly recollect, although it seemed as if the mention of one letter of it would have enabled him to remember the whole. It was not a word he had ever heard before, nor uttered in a tone like the voice of any being he knew; but, to whatever language it belonged, or however it was spoken, it was distinctly pronounced, and nothing but the want of a cue to begin with prevented his repeating it. He held it in his mind, and felt it as it were at the end of his tongue, but all his attempts to give it utterance were unavailing, and he might have forgotten it, but that, when he least thought of it, the same syllables were repeated near to him—not constantly, but from time to time, just as his eyes closed, and he lost the consciousness of his situation.

Still this was a circumstance of no consequence, and he strove to look upon it as a curious annoyance, which caused him more uneasiness than it deserved. It was the omen of nothing; for nothing took place that had not happened before. No good or evil fortune crossed his path, but the neighbors, with natural malignity, remarked that success had not made Trosk happier; and pithy hints, about the blessings of poverty and contentment, were dropped in his presence. But the malicious insinuations of his countrymen were less heeded by Spiel than the froth of the sea; his thoughts were on bags of money, and his attention was engaged with things to come.

Winter had now fairly set in, short days succeeded the long nights of that season, and the northern ocean was dashed in huge billows upon the shores. The blasts, which swept the icy sea of Spitzbergen, came laden with triple coldness, and withered the vegetation of the valleys through which they passed. The spray no longer merely whitened the rocks along the beach; it rose in showers upon the breeze, and smote the face of the wanderer far within the land. The wild fowl forsook the coast, and gathered together upon the sheltered lochs and pools among the hills; and squalls of hail and sleet drove along in rapid succession.

At this season little opportunity offered to the fishermen, to pursue their avocations; they were, for the most part, confined to their cottages, and employed themselves in refitting their tackle for the ensuing spring. Not so Spiel Trosk: if the sea would yield him no fish, it might give him drift wood, or the spoil of a wreck, or curious shells for the Greenland doctors, or even sea weed, or he might light upon a seal sleeping on a rocky nook, or surprise a solan within reach of a stone, or he might find something which would add to his possessions, and eventually be converted into money; for, like Ben Franklin, he well knew that, after lying by for seven years, many things at last turn to account. With this view, Spiel was accustomed to make a tour of the beach early every morning, and he seldom returned without a trifle of some kind in his hand.

In one of his rounds he stopped to observe a speck floating on the water, which, as it drew near, he found to be a seal by its diving. He stood for a little while, in hopes it might crawl out upon the shore, and give him an opportunity of striking it, and whilst thus engaged, just within the verge of the flood tide, which was rising, he occasionally turned his eyes upon the pebbles that were driven forward by the force of the waves. A billow, more heavy and more angry than the rest, rolled towards him, and as it rushed up the strand, it brought, amongst a cluster of wreck and sea moss, a yellow pellet, which it left at his feet. From habitual inclination to appropriate every thing to himself, the fisherman at first picked it up as an uncommon stone; but his fingers soon contracted with spasmodic firmness, when he discovered that he held in his hand a piece of pure gold. After a momentary ecstasy, he again looked at it, and saw that by the action of the water it had been rolled to and fro at the bottom, till it had become as round, and about as large as a musket bullet.

From ruminating on his wishes, and on the reports that had been framed concerning their accomplishment, the mind of Trosk had acquired a tinge of superstition. He gazed again and again at the golden pebble and thought of the bullets of precious metal which he had heard in his childhood were sometimes shot at witches, and he felt a slight thrill through his frame, when the idea of a bait being laid for him by the infernal foe crossed his brain.

The consideration of the weight and value of this little ingot, however, soon put weak fancies to flight, and he sat himself down to form some conjecture as to the manner of its arrival on that coast, while he carefully watched the waves for another such gift.

Long and abstract were the meditations of Spiel Trosk, as he patiently awaited the ebbing of the tide, in hopes the retiring waters would leave a second ball of gold for his reward. He reflected that, unless his prize had been cast into the form of a bullet, a supposition which he would not seriously entertain, it had probably formed the centre of a large piece of gold, which had been worn away to the size he now found it; and, with a sigh, at the loss of so many precious grains, as deep as if they had been drawn from his own pocket, he strove to estimate what might have been the bulk of the original ingot.

I cannot tell you how he set to work; but he was interrupted by a heavy squall of rain, hail, and snow, which drove with blinding fury over the ocean, full in his face, and though he cared little for weather, he thought it as well to seek shelter in a kind of cavern in the rocks, not far from where he was standing, foreseeing that the tempest would not last long. Hither, then, he retreated, not by entering at its mouth, for the sea constantly poured in at that opening, but by descending down a wide gap in its roof, which led by craggy steps to the cavity within. A dark and dreary retreat was this cavern, and of unusual formation, for it was not a blind cave, penetrating directly into the cliff, but a vast gallery or tunnel, which opened on one side of a steep headland, and pierced through to the other, allowing the waves to rush and tumble along its gloomy gulf, till they foamed out at the end opposite to that at which they entered. From the position of the external rocks, a constant succession of waves were directed through it, and a perpetual roar reverberated in its hollow bowels. Few but adventurous and thoughtless lads had ever ventured within its interior, and their curiosity led them not far; while the more mature, who had no motive for encountering its difficulties, were contented with warning their children not to fall down the rift that led to it, which gaped amidst a cluster of heather at the back of the promontory, and with handing down its name of the Nikkur Holl, as they had received it from their fathers.

Trosk left the low beach, and hurried round the hill, to the opening that conducted to the chasm; for the storm came pelting down more angrily than he had expected, and so thickly fell the sleet, that he could scarcely see to pick his way through the peat bogs, that lay at the foot of the acclivity, deluged as they were with the little rills that descended into them. He had not sought "the yawn," as the mouth of the rift was called, since he had been a youth, but he found it with little difficulty. On entering, however, he perceived that its gulf was much less practicable to him now than he had been used to consider it, when younger and more venturesome; and though he was the most expert climber within the Skerries, he felt no inclination to penetrate farther within its abyss, than was requisite to screen him from the driving of the tempest. At about ten or twelve feet below the edge, there was a shelf formed by the projection of a ledge of rock, and to this he let himself down, and having seated himself, at length, under the lee of a block of stone, he drew out his piece of gold from his pocket, and renewed his contemplations.

His chief endeavor was to recollect if he had ever heard of a vessel having been cast away near the Skerries; for to some such occurrence he attributed the presence of the golden bullet, and he wished, besides, to flatter a hope he had conceived, that this prize was only the harbinger of a greater treasure; but, with all his retrospection, he could recall no tradition of a shipwreck near his native isle, and he remained lost in amazement and doubt. Meanwhile, the face of the heavens became less obscure with clouds, the wind no longer howled over the mouth of the gulf, and the deep echoing bellow of the troubled surge within the Nikkur Holl was the only sound distinguishable. The fisherman, however, did not awaken from the revery into which he had fallen, but remained sitting, almost unconsciously, on the ledge within "the yawn." He was calling over in his mind the names of several old persons, from whom he meant to inquire what vessels had been lost on the coast within their memory, and was scarcely aware that he was not seated by his own hearth, when a voice whispered slowly in his ear, "Carmil-han." "Good God!" cried Spiel, starting up and looking fearfully down the abyss, from whence the sound seemed to come, "this is the word that haunts me in my sleep! what can it mean?" What is Carmilhan? he would have said, but he felt unwilling to pronounce the strange term, though he now recognised it as that which he had so long endeavored to utter. He continued a few moments gazing into the dark void beneath, and listening to the roaring waves, which seemed to wrestle unceasingly within the craggy entrails of the hill, till a degree of alarm overcame him, and he turned to ascend the sides of the rift; but, just as his last foot was withdrawn over the upper edge, a slight breath of wind passed out, and muttered, "Carmilhan." "Carmilhan!" repeated Trosk with violence: "Gracious Heaven, why is this unknown word thus spoken to me!" He then rushed down the hill, and stopped not till he had hastened a great way towards his cottage.

It must not be supposed, from this behavior, that Spiel was a coward; he was, on the contrary, one of the bravest of his countrymen, but the singular coincidence of the same sound, ringing in his ears at unexpected moments, and the dreary place in which he had last heard it, combined to agitate his mind. He felt, too, a degree of nervous irritability gain upon him, as his desire of wealth grew stronger; for that powerful impulse was opposed by a consciousness, that the encouragement he gave it was criminal, and he had, besides, constantly remarked, that the word which annoyed him always followed his reveries and dreams of riches.

By the time he reached his cabin, which he did at a swift pace, Trosk felt inclined to smile at his own folly, at scampering through burns and bogs at the rustling of the air from an outlet in the rock. He now half doubted that he had heard any thing more than a gust of wind; for, though he was confident that "Carmilhan" was the word he had fancied spoken to him in his sleep, and which he had in vain endeavored to recollect, he attributed the supposed repetition of it in "the yawn," to his having remembered it unexpectedly, at the instant the "sough" rose up through the tunnel. In fact he burst out into a laugh, as he looked at his breeks, splashed with the oozy puddles through which he had hurried, and he fondled "Sealgh," the dog who guarded both the cottages, in a more playful manner than was natural to him. Not having been at home to light his fire, he went to Winwig's hut, in hopes of getting some warm burgoo for breakfast, and, on entering, he found Petie fast asleep, sitting with his back propped against a chest, by the side of some smoaking peat, that lay amidst a heap of white ashes on the raised hearth, in the midst of the room. In each hand he still held a knitting needle, with which he had been at work, and a kitten was playing with the worsted ball attached to them, whilst Petie's head occasionally nodded forward, as if in mute approbation of its antics.

The fisherman entered the cottage of his comrade, with the intention of showing him the piece of gold he had found, but Winwig did not awake with the noise he made, and Spiel seated himself by the fire, and warmed his pannikin to prepare his meal in silence. At another time he would have roused Petie, who had fallen into a doze, as he was wont when unengaged in any very active employment; but now he felt some doubts of the prudence of letting his friend know his good fortune, since that harmless and simple being might take delight in spreading the news among the neighbors, who would be continually on the watch for other prizes of the same kind, and who might also adopt a measure he had contemplated himself. At length he resolved not to make his partner acquainted with "his luck," but to pursue his own counsels, till he had satisfied himself that there would be no danger in risking the disclosure; and he continued eating his crowdie with good appetite, and admiring the full, sleek, and torpid countenance of Winwig, and wondering how any being capable of making money by exertion could resign himself to such a state of unprofitable inaction. There was, however, in the blubber swollen cheeks and massive double chin of Petie, an air of contentment and happiness that offered the best reply to the sarcastic reflections of Trosk; and could a stander-by have beheld the broad, smooth, rounded features of one, half smiling in sleep, while his head nodded at ease, unable to sink far, from the rolls of fat that encompassed his neck and pillowed it up, and at the same glance could have viewed the sharp and care-marked visage of Spiel, with its deepening furrows, its wrinkled front, its thin projecting nose, curved over its compressed lips, while its hue of lived brown was rendered still more lurid by the gleams of its haggard eye, which shone behind its contracted brow of stiff black hair, like the glance of a tiger through a bush, he would have required no time to decide which person he would have chosen to be.

Petie's slumber was ended by the kitten, which, after taking sundry gamesome wheels round the room, ran scrambling up his clothes, till it mounted his head, from whence, when the "man mountain" moved, it leaped off in alarm. Not less alarmed was Winwig, who, clapping both his hands on his crown, where the beast had left several scratches, started up and staggered about, with his eyes half open, and his senses yet asleep; but a loud laugh, which Spiel was provoked to utter, recalled his recollection.

"Heigh! Spiel," cried the drowsy loon, rubbing his eyes, "I am very glad you are safe; for I have been dreaming strange things about you."

"About me, do you say?" replied the other.

"Ay, indeed, hinney," said Winwig, "I but now thought I was yourself, and, though I knew I was not you, I still fancied I was, and at the same time I thought I was a fish, and that I saw a bait which I wanted to take, though I knew there was a hook in it, that would lay hold of me. It was a yellow bait, and the more I looked at it the more I longed for it, and something seemed to mutter 'take it, take it,' in my ear, till at last I snapped at it, and was caught, and I felt as if being drawn along by the hook when I awaked; but all the while I thought I was you, and not me, though I imagined I was close by at the time."

"Pheugh! dreams are but dreams," said Spiel: "you felt the cat's claws in your head, and you imagined the rest to account for it. Has Steenson been here to-day?"

"No," replied Petie; "I think the squall has kept him away. It was so thick for a time that I could not see, and just then I dropped off."

"Where were you in the storm?"

"I was under shelter of a rock," said Trosk, turning the conversation, and, shortly after, he left the cabin.

From this time Spiel became more moody and discontented than ever. The sight of the gold, which he used to contemplate several times a day, seemed to infect him with an insatiability and restlessness, that kept him constantly from home. In spite of frost and snow, and storms and tempests, he was always on the beach; and whenever the boat could live on the sea, he put off shore, on pretence of fishing, though many old craftsmen made it their business to inform him that it was not the season for catching fish. But Spiel gave them some evasive answer, and they grew tired of imparting wisdom to no purpose to a self-willed adventurer.

Trosk's real object, in pretending to fish, was to use a grapnel he had constructed, in hopes of laying hold of something at the bottom, which would prove of value, or, at least, confirm him in his idea that some ship had foundered near the spot where he found the piece of gold. He had in vain inquired, of the oldest inhabitants of the isle, whether any vessel had been wrecked at any time near the Skerries. No one knew of a loss so near; and, though many could tell him of all the catastrophes of the kind that had happened amongst the Shetland Islands, since the time when the Spanish Armada appeared off them, he could hear of nothing that had taken place where he expected.

Spring appeared, and yet Spiel had met with no second piece of gold, although he had paced the beach till he had almost numbered every stone that lay upon it. He had raked the bottom with his grapnel, for a mile along the coast, and for the depth of ten fathoms, but had found nothing. He had watched when the waves were most rough, and the surf most violent, in hopes of seeing another rounded mass of precious metal thrown on the strand, but in vain, and now it was time to return to his usual duties—to drain the land, to till and sow, and dig peat, and set his tackle in order. Yet, without neglecting the business of the firm, he resolved to continue his researches for more gold. He felt convinced, that one lump of that substance could not have come alone to where he found it, and he persuaded himself, that he had not hitherto struck upon the place where the wreck had happened. To avoid wasting the time necessary for his other occupations, he regularly went out at night with his boat, and this he did for a long time in private; but, when his proceedings were noticed, he still continued the practice, declaring that he could not sleep, and that it was better to run the chance of catching something, than to be awake and idle in bed. By degrees, however, he let his desire for acquiring the supposed lost treasure overcome his prudence, and, instead of returning ashore to renew his labors in the field, he remained, pretending to fish, for the greater part of the day. Unfortunately, the place near which he had found the bullet was notorious for its want of fish; and, when his countrymen saw him toiling in such a barren spot, they were amazed at his pertinacity in dropping his lines where no prey had been taken for years. This obstinacy was the more conspicuous, because quantities of sillocks, herrings, mackerel, cod, ling, and tusk, were to be met with in other places; and the sagacity for which Spiel had formerly been remarkable began to be questioned, while the property he had accumulated daily dwindled away. At the same time, in consequence of all these meditations and considerations, and painful watchings, Trosk himself grew leaner, and more avaricious, without becoming more rich. Indeed, he was now much poorer; his features put on a more greedy and sharpened appearance, his eyes seemed capable of piercing through every thing at which he looked, and his cupidity was without control. Instead of Spiel Trosk, the money-maker, he was now called "Dan Bottlenose;"—not that any one dared apply such a name to him in his presence, for his blows were never tenderly given, nor slow in forthcoming, but his wilful folly in "fishing for blobs," as his neighbors used to term his labors, had become the jest of the island.

He was not, however, forsaken by Petie, though he brought home no fish, nor struck down wild swans as before; nor though Gustave Guckelsporn and Chriss Mienkel endeavored to persuade him that Spiel was daft or possessed, and that it was sinful to have any thing to do with him, while there were so many other good fellows in the island, to whom he could unite in partnership, as he had done with him. But so well was Winwig persuaded of the superior sense and conduct of his companion, that he adhered to his fortunes as firmly now as when they were more prosperous, and never even questioned Trosk concerning his motions.

Spiel himself, at length, began to doubt the rationality of his conduct, and looked back with regret on the months he had wasted in vain; yet, the poorer he became, the more earnest grew his attempts to recover some of the hidden wealth. He now loaded a large stone with tallow, and let it sink quickly to the bottom, in hopes of bringing up a pellet of gold attached to it, as stones and shells are found clinging, by the same means, to the sounding lead; but he drew from the bottom nothing but pebbles, starfish, and sea urchins, and this contrivance proved as unsuccessful as his grapnel had formerly done.

Whilst labor and disappointment exhausted the strength and the patience of the infatuated fisherman, a more obscure and indefinable misery preyed upon those moments which he was constrained to allow for rest. Still, from time to time, as he resigned himself to sleep, the same strange unearthly voice whispered in his ear the unknown word, to which he could find no interpretation, and still he doubted the evidence of his drowsy senses, and endeavored, when awake, to persuade himself, that by continually thinking of a sound, which had been at first only the creation of his fancy, he had rendered its recurrence habitual. Yet, while his reason strove to contradict his feelings, his mind became influenced by superstitious misgivings; he listened to tales of kelpies and water fiends with attention, and began to attribute his torment to a call from an evil spirit. He now could account for his hearing "Carmilhan" repeated in the "yawn," by believing that the Holl was haunted by these beings, and he thought of applying to the minister for advice. Then, he paused to consider whether charms would not drive them away, and would have taken council of an old woman, famous in those isles for her necromancy, had not his better feelings told him that the practice was unchristian; but an occurrence took place which overthrew his scruples, and brought him to the brink of the deep pit.

The moon appeared one night, when he was prosecuting his research with his grapnel. It rose full from behind a deep black cloud, whose skirt rested on the horizon, while its upper edge floated like a vast black pall in the mid heaven. The wind had gone down, and left the sea unruffled, but heaving with a heavy ground swell, rising and falling in large smooth billows, like the dance of a host of hills. Spiel continued his occupation, in spite of the uneasy motion which the water communicated to his boat; not without some hope, that the agitation of the ocean might lay bare or detach some portion of the treasures for which he was seeking. The position he occupied at the rising of the moon, was not far from the entrance to the Nikkur Holl; for he had investigated almost every other station, and when the moonlight threw the broad shadow of the cliffs upon the water, he could not help turning his head to mark the grotesque image of the noss, or headland, through which the tunnel ran. Its shade was stretched upon the surface, like the figure of a huge monster, while the roaring of the surge through the cavern seemed to imitate its bellow. Around it spread a field of brilliant light, but, far beyond, the sea was buried in the deepest gloom, beneath the sable cloud from which the moon had glided. Trosk, while his boat drifted, and drew the grapnel along the bottom, gazed first at the fanciful shadow of the Nikkur Holl, and then at the promontory itself, till his attention was fixed by his seeing something move on its summit. What it was he knew not, but at first he thought it was a pale flame, then it looked like a winged creature, dancing with extended pinions, and he fancied he could see its features, which were human. He looked to see if its shadow was reflected in the water, but nothing was visible on the image of the noss. He turned his eyes again towards the top of the cliff, and a chill sweat crept out of his skin, when he beheld the little being leap up distinctly from the brow of the hill, and fall down repeatedly on its taper legs.

A thousand strange and superstitious feelings arose within the mind of the fisherman, as he gazed on this realization of the gossip tales he had once despised. This, then, was a sea sprite or kelpie, and was no doubt the demon that tormented him with its unceasing whisper. This it was, which had muttered Carmilhan in the yawn; this was the little imp, Still Spraakel, which had always been said to dwell in the Nikkur Holl, and whose visits boded both good and evil, though no one could tell which till it happened; this was the moonlight in which it loved to appear. Spiel was running on thus in his fancy, while he looked at the object of his conjectures, till it made a third vault and vanished, and at the same time the grapnel caught hold of something at the bottom, and brought up the boat. The fisherman forgot the spirit for a moment, in the hope that this might prove some part of the treasure, and he began to haul with care upon his line. He pulled with force, but the hooks still clung firmly to the bottom, and though the swell of the waves jerked hard upon the rope, it kept its grasp. Spiel pulled still stronger, and brought his skiff close over the spot by his tugging; but the grapnel kept its hold. He grew uneasy, and feared his line might break, and he looked back to the noss, to see if the apparition was there. It was not there, but he beheld the black cloud advancing on all sides from the horizon, while the moon looked pale in the space in which she yet shone, in the centre of the heavens. The shadow of the headland was gone, and darkness was fast closing around him. The wind began to rise, and the bowels of the Nikkur Holl roared more loudly than before, while the heaving of the sea grew more troubled. His boat rocked, and he leaned over its side, and pulled with violence, resolved upon breaking his rope, or bringing up the spoil, be it rock or kist of gold. Again he strained hard, just as the clouds were about to shut out the light of the moon; the impediment gave way, and he believed the line had broken, for he felt no weight; but in an instant something large and dark rose up above the surface of the water, over which he bent, as if disposed to spring into the boat. He fixed his eyes upon it, with his hands extended to grasp it, whatever it might be; and as the water, which had now assumed a sparkling appearance, separated to give it passage, he saw inscribed upon a round black mass of something, though what he could not define, the hateful word, "Carmilhan." It stopped scarce half an instant above the surface, and again sunk, as quickly as it had risen; but Trosk, rendered desperate by this repetition of his torment, plunged his arm swiftly after it, and caught it by its hair. This gave way, and the rest was gone. He drew back his hand, but the moon had disappeared, and he could not see what sort of slippery matter remained in it. A groan of despair, urged almost to madness, burst from the lips of the fisherman at this defeat, and he gnashed his teeth and tore his hair with vexation; but presently, loud claps of thunder, followed by heavy drops of rain, foretold the onset of a storm, and he was compelled to take to his paddles, and make for the shore. A raging tempest succeeded, and Spiel, though cooped beneath a ledge of rock, was drenched with rain and spray; but, notwithstanding his situation, and the occurrences he had witnessed, he fell asleep before the day dawned over the ocean. His dreams were but a repetition of what he had shortly before beheld while awake, though aggravated by the wild delusions of unbridled fancy, and he was disturbed from his repose by an imaginary disappointment, similar to that which he had really suffered. When he opened his eyes, the first rays of the sun were gleaming over the waters before him. The billows had dwindled to little waves, leaping and dancing along the surface, with glittering crests and pale blue bosoms. A soft mist occupied the horizon, extending towards the island, and gleaming in many places with imperfect rainbows, which gradually seemed to melt away in the morning sunbeams. Of wind there was scarcely a breath, and one small black cloud floated alone upon a sky of milky azure.

The fisherman lay for sometime looking at the mild features of the new-born day, and comparing them with the hideous scowl of the preceding night. His view stretched over a wide expanse of sea, swelling in joyous motion, from the foot of the rocks, in which he had found protection, to the light veil of vapor which hung before the distance. He saw, at intervals, the restless gulls glide along the face of the deep, and the glittering fishes leap from its bosom; but yet he did not stir, and he wondered what feeling of idleness now bound his hitherto unwearied limbs.

After remaining a little longer thus stretched at ease, he was about to arise and take to his boat, when he fancied he could see, at the utmost verge of vision, something floating on the water. It was, indeed, but a speck, but it was a speck of hope, and Spiel never neglected the slightest chance of acquisition

It was something, and it might be something valuable, and that idea was sufficient to engage his attention. He resolved, therefore, to make towards it, lest any one else should have it in his eye, and secure it before him, and he was every moment on the point of creeping from his recess, but yet he felt willing to stay an instant longer. This instant was spent in a fresh conjecture on the nature of the floating body, and the succeeding instant was similarly occupied. In the meanwhile, the object of his consideration drew sensibly nearer, and became more visible; and as he concluded, by its progress, that it possessed more means of making way than the action of the winds and the waves, he began to suppose that it might be a skiff. That it was a boat, he in a short time became convinced, for he could mark its outline, and descry a figure sitting in it; but his surprise at the rapidity of its advance was increased, by his not being able to descry either the sails or oars by which it was propelled.

Having determined to remain where he was, Spiel drew himself as far back as possible within his hiding place, and kept his eyes fixed upon the bark. He now fancied that its quickness of motion had decreased, and that it came forward very slowly indeed. This he considered natural enough, as it evidently had no source of motion but the uncertain action of the waves, and he attributed his former supposition to the incorrect vision caused by the fog; but still he was astonished to observe it glide on, on end, with the stem towards the shore, instead of driving along with its broadside to the wind; because he could see that the person aboard paid no attention to the rudder, if it had one, but was seated rather more forward than aft. He noticed another circumstance, that excited his wonder, which was, that a small string of petrels, or Mother Carey's chickens, followed the wake of the bark, and flew at times around the head of the stranger; though it is well known that these birds never appear except in storms, of which they are considered both the harbingers and the spirits; yet just then the weather and the ocean were remarkably calm. Again, he was at a loss to account for the boat being directed immediately towards the spot in which he was secreted, for there was no inlet or landing place for some distance along the coast, but a bluff, rocky margin, till you come to Dummafrith's Voe.

This circumstance, however, he attributed to ignorance of the shore, or want of power to manage the boat, and he had time to form a thousand speculations while he lay ensconced in his nook.

At length, Spiel could make out something of the features and figure of the person who occupied the bark, and he found him to be a little withered old man, who sat quite stiff and upright on the rowers' bench, and neither moved his head nor body to the right nor to the left. His face was thin and sharp, and covered by a dry, wrinkled, tawny skin, stretched tightly over the stringy muscles which formed his cheeks and lips. His dress was of bright yellow canvass, or something like it, and a red night-cap covered his head, with its point sticking upright in the air, while in his hand he held a kind of instrument, that resembled a harpoon at one end and a blubber fork at the other.

"This is a very odd little fellow," thought Trosk to himself, as the boat came up towards him, "he looks as old and as stiff as if he had been dead and dried like a salted tusk for this fifty years—he certainly is not alive now."

This conjecture, indeed, seemed true, for the skiff having run up against the boat of the fisherman, which lay beneath his recess, remained stationary, and Spiel could see plainly enough, that the eyes of the little figure were closed, and that its mouth was shut, as if a long time had passed since it had been opened, and that there was no perceptible respiration going on.

Spiel, having advanced to the edge of his retreat, sat for sometime looking down upon the immoveable little figure before him, in wonder at the situation and attire of the man, and at the kind of boat which had brought him; for the whole was unlike any thing he had ever before beheld or heard of. But, after striving in vain to account for what he saw, he became impatient, and in a tone somewhat influenced by a kind of awe, which he felt creeping into his mind, he called out to the stranger to know if he was asleep. He might as well have called to the Nikkur Noss for any answer he received, though he repeated the question several times, each louder than the last. But, growing more bold or curious, he descended into his boat, and grasping the boat hook gave the little oddity a smart push. This was of no avail, and he pushed again harder than before, to as little purpose; and he was about to fasten a rope to the head of the skiff to tow it round to the voe, by the side of which he resided, thinking it fit that the authorities of the island should take cognizance of the dead body, for such he now considered it to be, when it slowly began to move. Its eyes opened, but at first they were lifeless, and void of sight, and turned in their sockets with a ghastly rolling, which, if it did not terrify the Shetlander, made him push off the strange boat from his own with a feeling of horror. Shortly after, the lips quivered, and were drawn apart into a fearful grin, which showed gums large and toothless, and expanded into a frightful gape, from whence a deep sigh, or rather groan, issued, along with a blast of vapor, more like the smoke of gunpowder than the steam of breath. Upon seeing this, Spiel mechanically shipped his oar over the stern of his boat, and began to skull her a little way off; but, reflecting that he was acting like a coward, he put her head about again

In the meanwhile, life seemed to have taken possession of the stranger, and he turned his eyes towards Trosk, and said, in a voice of uncommon expression, "Where am I?"

This was uttered in Dutch, and the fisherman, who was partially acquainted with that language, from having associated with whale-catchers and traders from Holland, exclaimed in the same tongue, "Who are you?"

"I am one sitting in a boat," answered the stranger, somewhat sharply, "to whom it would have been better for you to have given an answer than a question."

"Why?" said Spiel drily, for he was not a man to be lectured.

"Because," said the other, "I could have satisfied questions you might have liked to ask."

"You have not satisfied one which I asked just now," cried the fisherman; "but I have no mind to wrangle with you. You are at one of the Shetland isles—one of the outer Skerries—Whence do you come? and why do you come in this strange fashion?"

"What is strange to you is not strange to me," replied the little man. "I came over the sea to look for the Carmilhan."

"For the Devil!" ejaculated Spiel.

"I have no need to look for *him*," said the stranger.

"In the name of God! what is the Carmilhan?" cried the fisherman fervently.

"I answer no questions put in that manner," exclaimed the little man, wriggling about as if in pain, and groaning as if he growled.

"I say, what is the Carmilhan?" repeated Spiel, not heeding the anguish of the stranger.

"The Carmilhan is nothing now," said the other; "but once she was as brave a ship as ever bore a mast."

"A ship!" cried Trosk.

"Yes, a ship," repeated the stranger; "and when she was lost among these islands, she carried more gold than had floated in any vessel before her."

"Where was she lost, and when?" exclaimed the fisherman.

"It is nearly a hundred years since she was wrecked," replied the little man, "and it was in the night: so that, though I was on board her at the time, I know not the precise spot; but I am come hither to discover it."

"A hundred years ago!" cries the Shetlandman—"You on board a ship a hundred years ago! Pray, how old are you?"

"Old enough to have sailed in the Carmilihan," replied the stranger. "But why do you marvel?—Pray how old is Chriss Mulrill?"

"A hundred and ten, I am told," said Spiel; "yet how come you to know her?"

"I knew her when a child," said the other.

"What can you want with the treasure?" cried the fisherman—"what need has a man of your years of money?—Teach me how to find the gold; I will take the trouble of raising it, and we will share it between us."

"Yes, and how shall I be sure of your keeping your engagement?" said the little man sneeringly.

"Be always with me," answered the other. "We will divide the money as we obtain it; and should I offer to wrong you, do you reveal the secret to my enemies. The fear lest another should learn the situation of the wreck, will be a bond sufficiently strong to ensure my fidelity."

"Well, be it so," replied the stranger. "But art thou a man of courage?" The first step requires a strong heart, Spiel Trosk."

"You know my name, old carl!" cried the fisherman in amazement. "How comes this?"

"I knew your father, though you did not," answered the little man in his evasive way; "and I know more than you could demand, though you sat here to question, and I to make replies, till another century were added to my age. I ask you—are you a man of courage?"

"Try me, and learn," replied the Shetlander.

"You must try yourself," said the man in the red cap, "and if you follow my directions you will learn the spot where the riches of the Carmilhan lie hidden. You must go, just before midnight, to the most remote and desolate place in yon island, and you must take a cow with you, and having killed it, you must get some one to wrap you up in her fresh hide. You must then be laid down, and left alone on the wild heath, and ere the clock strikes the first hour of morning your desires will be satisfied."

"That is how old Engrol's son was lost, body and soul!" exclaimed Trosk, in a tone of abhorrence. "Thou art Satan!" continued he, again skulling his boat away—"Thou art Beelzebub, old tempter, the Prince of darkness—Aroint thee, demon!—I defy thee!"

"Thou art an utter fool," bawled the old man to Spiel, as he fled hastily from him. "A bubble-blinded bottlenose!—May the curse of avarice hang over thee! May the thirst of gold choke thee. May the——" but the fisherman having taken to both his oars, was soon too far from the little man to hear his exclamations, and he gained the point of the Nikkur Noss before he checked his way, or turned to look after the detestable being he had quitted. When Trosk did look for the object of his terror, he perceived him sitting as motionless and as rigid in his skiff as when first he approached to the island, and with as little signs of animation. The boat was moving forward, as f in pursuit of him, and round it flew the petrels, whose presence was so singular, as though in attendance on the little being. Although the Shetlander was by no means deficient in courage, but gifted with rather more than the ordinary race of men, he did not feel willing to have another meeting, alone, with one who seemed possessed of supernatural powers; and, after making himself certain that the strange creature was actually running down upon him, he set up his sail, and again plied his oars with vigor. In this way he shot swiftly round the Noss, and stood down to the bottom of the Voe; but, though he kept a keen eye upon the promontory, he never saw the little man's skiff come past it.

Spiel Trosk had now passed the summer in dragging for ingots and ducats; but, as I have already said, instead of becoming richer, the wealth he had before accumulated was greatly diminished. With his property his reputation for sagacity and success likewise began to decrease, and his countrymen attributed to nothing less than infatuation his obstinacy of persisting to fish in places which were well known to be unfrequented by the inhabitants of the deep. It was in vain that he heard of shoals of herrings, ling, and tusk, being seen and caught in unusual quantities, round various points of the islands; his pertinacity yielded to none of his former objects of avidity, and his boat nightly returned to his cabin as clean of fish as it had departed in the morning. "The Skerry fisherman" had for sometime ceased to be the principal contributor to the market of Lerwick, and no one had supplied his place, for no one possessed the energy and resolution which had led Spiel to cast his nets by night and by day, because probably no one was urged by the same incentive—avarice. Instead of daily adding to their store, the necessities of the partners had daily subtracted from it, till no store remained. Want succeeded to comparative affluence; and, from the want of the conveniences, they soon sunk to the want of the necessaries of life. But, though this painful alteration was evidently owing to the strange obstinacy of Trosk, Winwig never for a moment deserted or upbraided his partner: he still placed the same unbounded reliance upon his superior powers as he had done when his exertions were successful; and, though now the whole task of supplying the means of existence had devolved upon him, he was never heard to complain.

These circumstances seemed to add another pang to the torments Trosk already endured, and his feelings were still more embittered by a belief that now began to infuse itself into his mind, that he was, as his neighbors declared, wasting his time; yet such was his madness, that the poorer he became, the longer and more strenuously did he continue his luckless fishery for gold and jewels. To add to his mental misery at his want of success, the fiend-like whisper of Carmilhan still annoyed his hour of sleep, at intervals, though it would leave him for a time; but it did not fail to return when he had begun to hope he should never experience it again.

At length poverty and disappointment, combined with avarice, actually unsettled his brain; for to nothing else than insanity can be attributed the desperation which determined him to follow the instructions of the little man, who had accosted him on the morning before-mentioned. The charm proposed by this strange being was not unknown to the islands of Scotland, but it was known as a snare which had entrapped many to their fearful destruction, and the tales connected with it were of a kind appalling to the listener. But nothing now could influence the fisherman against his resolution to retrieve his fortunes, or perish—not even the pagan origin attributed to the spell; for it was alleged, and perhaps truly, that the slaughter of the victim was a sacrifice offered to the powers of darkness, as a propitiation for their good will, and all the abomination of a heathen and an idolater was imputed to the deed.

It was in vain that Petie Winwig, who was, (for a fisherman,) a devout kirk-going man, especially when it is considered that he loved to sleep on Sundays, endeavored to dissuade his friend from pursuing his purpose. Useless were his representations, that they should certainly manage, somehow or other, to get through the winter, and that it was sinful to tempt Providence by sleeping all night wrapped up in a cow-hide in the open air, when he might repose comfortably in bed beneath a rain-tight roof. Neither his arguments nor his entreaties had any effect upon Spiel, who seemed to grow more obstinate in proportion to the endeavors made to convert him from his design, and the fat good-natured fisherman's persuasions ended in his yielding to the violent harangues of his associate, and agreeing to accompany him to the desert place where the charm was to be effected.

The hearts of both were wrung with pain when they fastened a rope round the horns of a beautiful cow, which they had brought up from a calf with all the kindness usually shown to a favorite. She was the last remnant of their former prosperity, and had been retained till now, though they had frequently wanted a meal, which the sale of Luckie would have supplied. They could not part with her, they could not see her the property of another, but the delusion of Trosk made him ready to sacrifice every other feeling, and his overruling spirit damped the opposition of his comrade.

It was now September, and the long nights of the long Shetland winter had commenced. The clouds of evening rode heavily on the gusty winds, which rolled them around, like huge icebergs eddying in the Malestroom; deep shadows filled the glens and valleys between the hills, and the moist peat bogs, and the murky channels of the rills, looked black and fearful, like yawning gulfs and gaping crevices in the earth. Spiel led the way, and Winwig came after, shuddering at his own temerity, and following his companion more from habit than from inclination. A thousand looks he spent upon the beautiful cow, which walked to execution like a young criminal, showing more youthful as his death draws nearer. It was of that small and graceful breed, whose sleek fat sides, and glossy coats, offer so strong a contrast to the shaggy lank limbs and pendant pot bellies, of the savage horses that browse on the Shetland hills. Her face wore the quiet and confiding expression which domesticated animals show towards those who caress and feed them; and when she turned, as she sometimes did, towards Petie, as if in expectation of a root, or a tuft of hay, his feelings overcame him, and a tear passed across his eye, if it did not trickle from it. Often was he on the point of begging Spiel to spare their favorite beast, and exchange her for one less loved; but an awe, which never before had chained his tongue, now bound it, and he mechanically traced the footsteps of his friend, as though he had been his slave.

The spot to which the desperate fisherman bent his course was as desolate as his soul could desire. It was a shallow valley, between two hills, but it was a mountain glen, and was elevated above other vales, which led descending from it towards the coast. The summits of its barren sides were shrouded in dull gray mist, and the patches of heather, and the blocks of stone which lay scattered along the slopes, were imperfectly visible in the gloomy light, which entered rather from the dell beneath than from the sky above; many slow creeping streams stole darkling down the hills, and fed a boggy rivulet, which flowed oozing and slumbering through the swampy bottom, till, gathering in volumes, it fell into the succeeding dales, and terminated in the sea, which, by day, was visible at the end of the range of highlands, though now the waves could only be heard bursting furiously over the rocks and headlands that opposed it, or rolling mournfully among the pebbles that formed its bed on the level shore.

The only route which would allow the cow to attain the scene of her intended slaughter was along the edge of the stream, which brought its darkened waters from the upper glen. When the fishermen first joined it, near the beach, it was a full and headlong current, tumbling from the little basins it had worn among the rocks, with a quick pace and a brawling sound. In some places it wore its way through beds of disjointed stones, and gushed, in varied forms, between the opposing fragments; in others it sped unseen between banks of bright green moss, which hung over its silent course, almost concealing it; and, again, it appeared bursting out from a black cavity in the peaty soil, to fill a murky pool, or spread through a swampy hollow. Further up the valley, its progress was less distinct, and its voice scarce more than a murmur; but the verdant hue that marked its path along the glens, and the deep brown tint of its sometimes stagnant surface, offered a strong contrast to the pale, withered purple of faded heath, and the yellow mosses of the surrounding hills. No vestige of man was seen in these wild solitudes, and silence was only broken by the noise of water, and the cries of birds. The hoarse bellow of the ocean rose at times upon the blast, which rushed, but spoke not, through the barren dells, and the last late shriek of the fierce sknaw was mingled with its echo.

Not more unwilling could have been the march of the victim, had it known the fate to which its progress tended, than were the steps of Petie Winwig, as he followed the crooked track which the bogs and rivulets compelled his comrade to adopt. Opposing feelings of every description rose in his mind against the deed to which he lent himself an accomplice. Friendship exclaimed, that he was aiding the companion of his youth in the worst species of self-destruction, the destruction of the soul; humanity and gratitude upbraided him with abandoning the harmless animal, which he had taught to look upon him as a protector, and which had returned his kindness with its milk and its offspring; and religion whispered, that even he himself was about to participate in an unhallowed and fiendish sacrifice!—a rite of Baal!—a propitiation of the grace of Satan!—an offering of blood on high places! All the denunciations he had heard or perused against the sin of worshipping idols, and bowing to Beelzebub, came across his mind; all the stories to which he had listened, of the fatal ends of those who dabbled in the damned mysteries of witchcraft, rose fresh, but more terrible, upon his memory; and when his feet sunk, as they often did, in the fresh loose peat, that sometimes formed their path, his soul shook with fear, that the earth was about to gape and swallow him. But Spiel Trosk strode steadily forward, leading the unfortunate "Luckie," with the air and energy of one who deems that nothing which may follow can exceed the misery that has passed.

His tall gaunt form, and long swift stride, gave him the look of a sorcerer, stalking supernaturally along to the perpetration of some devilish action, and could any uninitiated eye have seen the little procession which wound and mounted up the wild defile, leading from the sea to the highest glen, it must have considered it, (as it really was,) hastening to perform in secret some infernal ceremony of necromancy.

The Skerry fisherman entered upon the last stage of the mountain valleys with the firm step and the daring feelings, which accompany the untamed criminal to the scaffold. With all his usual strength and nerve, he turned to help the breathless victim, whose unassisted efforts could not enable her to climb over a rocky ledge, that separated the lower from the highest glen; and without heeding the tottering gait and pallid countenance of Petie, he led her away towards the centre of the area, with a pace quickening as he proceeded. Winwig, though he trembled, followed; and well might it have been supposed, from his drooping and abandoned aspect, that he too was about to be sacrificed with his favorite. As he crept onward, he felt the earth shake beneath him, and he perceived that Spiel was proceeding over a quaking bog, whose wide surface of closely woven moss seemed floating on a pool of water, and vibrated at every step, with a motion truly symbolic of his own sensations.

Even Luckie now seemed fearful to proceed, and looked back, and lowed with a hollow sound, which was as unlike the rejoicing bellows she used to utter by the side of her native voe, as was her situation and her destiny. If any thing were wanting to fill to the brim Petie's cup of misery, it was a murmur from his beloved knowt:—a gush of tears forced themselves to his eyes, and started over the lids; but, though they fell like rain drops on the ground, he did not speak. He was, with all his weakness, resolved not to oppose the measures of his friend, nor to add, by the expression of his own sorrow, to the high wrought agony of mind which he knew, from what he saw, Spiel was silently enduring.

In a few minutes Trosk reached the place where he had resolved to make trial of the efficacy of the charm. It was a small circumscribed spot, in the midst of a wide morass, whose trembling treacherous carpet spread around over the greater part of the valley, I call it a valley, because it was enclosed by hills, but it was rather a vast platform, near the summit of the mountains, whose highest ridges surrounded it like an amphitheatre, leaving open one side, which looked down into the dells beneath, and over them out to sea. The streamlets, that trickled from the acclivities, had penetrated the bed of moss, which had been gathering in thickness over the peat for ages; and the tough dense matwork quivered above the moist ooze, without permitting the foot to pierce it.

The gloom of evening had greatly increased, whilst the Shetlanders had been making their way up the ascent of the long defile, and its obscurity was augmented by the blackness of a cloud, which had slowly floated above their heads, till it had settled round the neighboring eminences. The mist, which ever accumulates about the tops of the Zetland mountains, had begun to fall in a thick drizzle, and there was so little light to help them, that they advanced close to a large gray stone, which stood up from the bosom of the marsh, without perceiving it to be tenaned. The moans of "Luckie" gave the alarm, and were answered by the loud scream of an eagle, which slowly spread its dusky wings, and swept off from the rock on which it had been seated. Petie started, but Spiel approached, and laid his implements on the rough fragment. Winwig turned round, and cast his eyes down into the valley, at the extremity of which the sea might be heard, tumbling and roaring among the crags of the coast; he looked up to the sky, and along the summits of the hills, and saw that the dim atmosphere was darkened by the overhanging volume of heavy vapor, that seemed increasing above him; he listened to a low rumbling sound, that issued from the murky cloud; he turned again, and found that Trosk had drawn the rope, that held the head of Luckie, round the base of the stone—he beheld him raise a poleaxe over his head—he could not bear this!—With his hands clasped, or rather clinched, he fell upon his knees, and exclaimed—"In the name of God, Spiel Trosk, spare yourself and Luckie! Ay, hinney, spare her!—spare yourself, and me!—spare your soul!—spare your life! and if this deadly sin must be, wait till the morrow, and bring some other creature than our own dear kine."

"Petie, art thou daft!" cried Spiel, staring upon him with the eye of a madman, and with the weapon still uplifted in the air. "Shall I spare Luckie, and perish?"

"You would not perish," answered Winwig, rapidly—"you would not perish! Whilst I have hands, Spiel, what need you fear to perish? Stay, hinney' stay! and let me work from break of day till fall at night, rather than plunge your soul into perdition, and slay the poor dumb beast."

"Then take this axe," exclaimed Spiel, with vehemence, "and drive it through my brain!—I will not quit this spot again, unless I have my will.—Can your hands work up the riches of the Carmilhan?—Can your fingers supply more than the vilest necessaries of life?—But let them end my misery!—Here, take my place, and I will be your victim."

"Spiel," cried Winwig; starting on his feet, and in an agony, "Strike!—spare nothing!—But ah, Trosk, it is your eternal life for which I fear!—know you not that this is the 'Peghts' aultar stone?'—and that you are about to offer up a sacrifice to the demon they worshipped?"

"I know no such thing," cried the other Shetlander loudly, and with a grinning laugh, that showed he was determined to know nothing, or to think of nothing, contrary to his purpose.—"I know no such thing—I mean no such thing, Petie Winwig, I tell thee.—You are mad, man, and you will drive me mad.—But Luckie shall not die—you shall have her instead of me!"—and he dashed down the axe, and clutched the knife from the stone, with the intention of plunging it into his bosom.

Petie, the feeble-minded Petie, was in an instant at his side;

he wrenched the instrument from his grasp, and in the next moment he seized the poleaxe, and whirling it round his head, he let the blade fall full on the skull of Luckie, with such force that he cleft it in twain, and she rolled dead, without a struggle, at the feet of her masters.

A flash of lightning, accompanied by a clap of thunder, followed this action, and Trosk stared at his companion, as a man would stare if he beheld a child accomplish what he should fear to attempt. Not that he could not have shown as much bodily strength himself; but that the mild and passionless Petie should have assumed a part so energetic, and so contrary to the spirit of his former life! But Winwig neither started at the thunder, nor looked at his companion, nor spoke, but instantly made use of the knife he had seized, to flay his favorite; and he proceeded as quickly and as dexterously as if she were only a seal. In this occupation he was joined by Spiel, after he had recovered from his surprise, though he felt as much reluctance now as eagerness before, and his heart sickened at the hot steams that arose from the carcass. Ere the hide was taken off, the mist had gathered so densely around the hills, that the fishermen were both enveloped in clouds, and drenched with rain. The fog rolled along the little plain in revolving billows, but slowly; for, though the wind was heard rushing through the dells below, and struggling with the distant surge, it was not yet amongst the mountains. The rumbling of thunder grew louder around them, and came nearer at times, exploding among the highest eminences, and descending at times upon the plain. Bright flashes and corruscations darted across the moss, and played about the "Stane," appearing to settle for a moment upon its summit, and then gliding swiftly over the surface of the swamp; and more than once the Shetlanders started, and looked up, as they fancied they heard the flap of a wing close above their heads.

At length, the skin being stripped off, it was stretched out upon the ground, at a little distance from the carcass, and Spiel laid himself upon it. Without breaking the silence that had been maintained since the fall of Luckie, Winwig proceeded to envelope his companion in the covering, still warm from the body, leaving only his head unswathed. He then bound the rope round the outside, and, having completed the operation as fully as he could devise, he stood for a moment looking down upon Trosk, whose features were now scarcely visible through the darkness of night. He then spoke—"Spiel," said he, "can I do anything else for you?"

"Nothing more," replied the other, "fare thee well!"

"Farewell!" returned Petie, "and may God protect and forgive you, as I do."

These last words were uttered in a less firm tone than that in which he had before spoken, and in an instant he was gone from the view of his associate.

The simple fisherman had scarcely left his more daring partner exposed upon the wild peat bog, than, as if his departure had been a signal concerted with the demons of storm and desolation, a tempest broke forth, to which neither the experience of Spiel, nor his recollection of the reports of others, could find a parallel. It began with a glare of lightning, which exposed to his view, not only the crags and hills in his own neighborhood, but the valleys beneath, and the sea, and the small islands which lay scattered out beyond the bay. He saw them but for a moment, but he could perceive their rocks whitened with the foam of tremendous billows, which were bursting over them; and he believed he beheld what appeared to him the vision of a large strange-built vessel, driving along, dismasted, upon the ocean. He scarcely did believe, and half doubted, that he had seen this latter object, for its figure and its crew, (whose frantic gestures he had also imagined he had distinguished,) were such as were to him before unknown. But if this sight were a mere phantom, what could have brought it before his eyes? The darkness that succeeded this wide gleam was of the deepest dye, and the peals of thunder that broke around him were as loud as though the heavens had burst in its discharge. A shower of fragments was scattered from the mountain tops, and poured down their sides, with a din and clatter more terrible than the noise of the elements. Spiel expected every moment to be crushed to pieces, or buried beneath a mass of rock, and his helpless state was now to him a source of the greatest anguish. Some of the pieces dashed nearly up to him, and others bounded past, and rushed headlong over the declivity into the dell beneath, where he could hear them rolling and splashing through the deep morass. It rained when Winwig had left him, but now a body of fluid fell down upon him scarcely divided into streams, for of drops there were none, and in an instant the surface of the quaking bog on which he lay became deluged. He suddenly found himself surrounded by water, which covered his lower extremities, leaving his head and shoulders free; for Petie had raised them on a tuft of moss, which, had he not done, Trosk would have been totally immersed. Still he felt the inundation rise, for the waterspout, or whatever else it was, continued to descend, and as he was unable to stir, either hand or foot, he gave himself up to death. He would have called upon heaven, but the reflection of the iniquity in which he was engaged, choked his prayer. He would have invoked the powers of darkness, but a deep-felt horror thrilled through his frame at the idea. He endeavored to struggle, but the hide of Luckie seemed to cling more closely to him, with an avenging embrace. He thought of Petie—where was Petie? He shouted Petie! Petie!

with all his strength, but his voice was drowned in the rush and turbulence of the flood, and he strained it till its sound was only a hoarser scream. A hoarser scream replied to him, or was it echo? He screamed again, in greater agony, half hoping, half in terror; but the water filled his ears, and he knew not if he were answered. "Gracious God, I perish!" murmured Spiel as the fluid touched his lips, and passed over them; but, in the next instant, a rush, like the hurried tumble of a cataract, faintly reached his hearing, and he felt the deluge sink from him, and leave his mouth uncovered. It subsided, however, but a little, yet enough to give him hope, and his dismay grew less. The pouring down from the clouds likewise diminished, and the pitchy blackness of the atmosphere was less intense. Gradually the fall of water became converted into a heavy shower, which continued to grow less, and glimpses of dull light broke through the mass of darkness. Spiel blessed the sight, and found his courage return; but he felt as exhausted as if he had been struggling with death, and he longed to be released from his confinement.

Still the purport of his sufferings was unaccomplished, and with reviving life he felt his avaricious desires reenter his heart, and this even whilst the water was still above his shoulders. He was sensible, however, that it passed away, and he conjectured rightly that its sudden rise had been owing to one of the fragments of stone having rolled to the outlet of the stream, and stopped its passage into the glen, through the rocky ledge: but the weight of the accumulating body of water had moved it from its position, and allowed sufficient opening for the stream to escape, and this drew off the inundation by degrees.

Midnight passed and Trosk, though he knew not the time began to doubt the efficacy of the charm. He was tired and weary of his situation, and he would have preferred an incantation of a more busy kind. Rest with him was only appropriated to sleep, and that he granted with reluctance; but now that he was compelled to be quiescent, he felt a sense of drowsiness. Whether this was the effect of habit, or fatigue, or cold, I cannot say, but so it was, and it so overpowered him, that, in spite of his situation, he lost at times all consciousness. The ebbing of the flood had nearly left him dry in the space of half an hour, and, believing morning to have advanced two hours at least, he resolved to give himself up to sleep, as the best way of passing the hours till he was released.

He closed his eyes, and slept; but how long he knew not. He was awakened by what at first he thought something passing across his face, but he was soon sensible that it was a violent gust of wind. It was again nearly as dark as before, and repeated blasts rushed past him, with an angry murmur. There was but little rain now falling, and that came more like spray upon a gale than a shower, but he felt even more chilled than when he was surrounded by water. He heard the rage of the ocean more distinctly than he had done, and he fancied that it forced its stubborn waves much further into the valley below than the beach. An inexplicable turbulence seemed mingled with the usual uproar of billows bursting on a rocky shore, and the dells seemed more the seat of the confusion than of the echo. He could have imagined that the sea had overcome its boundaries of ages, and was taking possession of the conquered land. A rush of water was certainly coming towards him—he longed to be able to see. Another glare of lightning, like the first lit up all the horizon, and he saw for a moment the ocean and the islands looking more fearful than before. Even in that instant he strained his eyes to catch one glance of the ship he had thought abandoned to the fury of the elements, and he again believed he beheld it, raised on the back of a huge billow, which dashed it down at the foot of a distant promontory, and closed over it. The headland was the Nikkur Noss, which he knew well, as the scene of his mispent labors. He might, perhaps, have looked longer, for the lightning continued to flash so fast that there was scarcely an interval of darkness, but with a tremendous gush a column of foam rose up, from beyond the craggy ledge of the platform on which he lay, and, whirling round in the air, came towards him.

What passed during a few succeeding moments, Spiel could not well remember. He felt himself raised from the moss, and borne along above it, and he saw the Peights' Aultar Stane twisted out of the earth. He heard a raging struggle, as of wind and water fighting for mastery, and he was hurled against a bank with violence, and deprived of his senses.

When he recovered, the tempest had ceased, the heavens were clear and bright with a vivid illumination, and the air was still. He was lying, not where Petie had left him, but at the foot of the ridge of eminences, bounding the little plain, and his frame seemed shaken and more powerless than before. He could now distinguish the roll of the waves on the shore, flowing as they were wont in calm weather, and he attempted to discover the time by the rise of the tide; for there was not the least sign of dawn, though the sky was brilliantly enlightened. He listened attentively, and heard not only the brawling murmur of the sea pouring among the shingles, but a burst of solemn music mingled with it, yet so faint that he was not convinced of its reality. A pause ensued—again a strain of harmony floated on the untroubled air—and again it was lost as a gust of wind swept up the dell. Again he heard it louder than before, and he fancied it approached him, and, as it continued, he believed he could distinguish the tune of a psalm he had heard sung by the crew of a Dutch herringbuss, which had been off the Skerries in the preceding summer. Nay, he fancied he could perceive voices occasionally join the notes, and sing the very words he had formerly heard; for as I have said before, Trosk understood the language. Although, when the winds rose he always lost the sounds of this singular concert, yet, whenever there was a lull, he was satisfied that it gradually drew nearer, and he could now trace its advance, winding slowly up the glens from below, towards that in which he was extended.

At length it was so distinct, that he was persuaded it must have crossed the ledge that bounded the brink of the plain, and he endeavored to raise his head, so that he might gain a view of the source of this extraordinary melody. There was a loose fragment of stone near him, and by dint of wriggling and pushing himself along like a seal, he contrived to elevate his head upon it, and, looking forth, he beheld a long and gleamy procession approaching towards him, over the quaking bog on which he had at first been laid. Sorrow and dejection were marked on the countenances of the beings composing the troop, and their habiliments appeared heavy with moisture, and dripping like fresh sea weeds. They drew close up to him, and were silent. First came the musicians, whose instruments he had heard so long and so anxiously, but he could not scrutinize them much, for, as they advanced opposite to him, they wheeled off to the right and left, and took their stations on either side. The front space was immediately occupied by a varied group, who appeared, by their deportment, to precede some object of great distinction, which, when they parted and filed off in the same manner as the band, presented itself to view.

This was a tall, bulky, though well built man, whose capacity of belly was properly balanced by the protuberance of that part which honor has assumed to herself. His head was not little, and his face appeared rather swollen. His shoulders were wide, and were clothed in a full coat of broad cloth, fashioned after the manner of the fourth generation past. Its skirts reached below his knees, round which they curved. It was collarless, but sleeves, vastly deep, hung from the arms, the cuffs of which were adorned with cut-steel buttons, of great circumference and brightness. Broad bands of rich gold lace covered every seam and edge, more glorious in the eyes of the beholder than the setting sun, and the lapels of a quilted vest hung down from the immense orb of his bowels, heavy with the brecious metal that braided them. His thighs were arrayed in preeches of scarlet velvet, silk hose disguised his legs, and large square-toed shoes covered his feet, and lent their thongs to support gold buckles of great breadth, which glittered with precious stones. On his head was placed a long, flowing, flaxen, curling wig, surmounted by a small three-cornered cocked hat, buttoned up with gold bands, and a long, straight, basket-hilted sword hung, suspended in a broad buff-embroidered belt, by his side. In his hand he held a gold-headed clouded ground rattan, of great length and thickness, and close by his side walked a black boy, bearing a long, twisted, grotesquely fashioned pipe, which he occasionally offered to his lord, who stopped and gave a solemn puff or two, and then proceeded.

When he came immediately opposite to Spiel, he stood still and erect, and a number of others ranged themselves on his right hand and on his left, whose dresses were fine, but not so splendid as their superior's, and they bore pipes of common form only. Behind these drew up a group of persons, many of whom were ladies, some bearing infants in their arms, others leading children by their hands, all dressed in strange and gorgeous apparel, though of fashions unknown to him who beheld them; and, lastly, came a body of men and lads, with big loose trowsers, thick heavy jackets, and red worsted night-caps, whom Trosk instantly knew to be Dutch sailors. Each of these had a quid of tobacco stuck in his cheek, and a short blackened pipe in his mouth, which he sucked in melancholy silence.

The fisherman lay still, and saw this grim troop assemble around him, with feelings of mingled alarm and wonder; his heart did not sink, for it was kept alive by fearful curiosity, but cold sweats gathered upon his brow. Presently, the principal figure looked round, and seeing his attendants all in their stations, he took his long twisted pipe from the hands of the negro, and began to smoke in long and deep-drawn whiffs; and this seemed as a signal to the rest to follow his example, for, immediately, every mouth was in action, and which ever way Spiel cast his looks, he beheld nothing but glowing tubes and gleaming eyes turned towards him, while wreaths of smoke rose up from the multitude, and formed a dense cloud-like canopy above them. Nevertheless, though he could plainly distinguish the features and the dresses of this ghastly crew, he could also see the stars clearly glimmering through them, and now gleams of fire and electric flashes began to shoot across the heavens, and the sky grew more vividly bright than it had been. Still, though Trosk could behold all these appearances through the bodies of the phantoms, he could also perceive that his ghostly visitants were closing slowly upon him, that their ranks grew more dense, and the space between him and them more narrow, while their puffs became more violent, and the smoke rose up with redoubled velocity.

The Shetlander was naturally a bold and, indeed, a desperate man, and he had come to the glen with the desire of conversing with beings of another world; but when he beheld this fearful, strange, and unintelligible multitude crowded round him, and pressing nearer and nearer as if about to overwhelm him, his courage yielded, his frame, shook, and the sweat ran copiously down his face. The appearance of the black boy occasioned him more terror than all the rest; for, never having seen a negro in those far distant isles, he believed him to be a little devil, and his white teeth and whiter eye-balls looked terrific against his sable face; but his terror redoubled, when, on turning his eyes up to look at the sky above, he perceived close behind his head that little dry withered man who had accosted him in the skiff, sitting now as rigidly upright as before, but with a pipe in his mouth, which he seemed to hold there as if in grave mockery of all the assembly. Trosk started convulsively, and a choking sensation seized upon his throat; but, summoning all his energy, he mastered it, and directing himself to the principal person before him, he exclaimed, "In the name of him ye obey, who are ye? and what want ye all with me?"

The great man gave three puffs, more solemnly than ever, upon this adjuration, and then, taking the pipe slowly from his lips, and giving it to his attendant, he replied, in a tone of chilling formality, "I am Aldret Janz Dundrellesy Vander Swelter, whilome commander of the good ship Carmilhan, of the city of Amsterdam, homeward bound from Batavia, in the east, which being in northern latitude, 60°, 10′′, and 17°, 5′, longitude east, from the island of Ters, at 12 P. M. on the night of the 21st of October, 1699, was cast away on the inhospitable rocks of this island, and all on board perished. These are mine officers, these my passengers, and these the mariners forming my gallant crew. Why hast thou called us up from our peaceful bowers, at the bottom of the ocean, where we rest softly on beds of ooze, and smoke our pipes in quiet, listening to the songs of mermaids?—I say, why hast thou called us up?" Spiel had expected to commune with spirits, good or bad, but he had not anticipated a visit from the captain of the vessel he wished to rifle; and, indeed, the question he had to propose was rather an awkward one to put to Mynheer Vander Swelter, for ghosts are in general tenacious of hidden treasure, and a Dutch ghost was likely to be more tenacious than any other, and, in particular, the spirit of a commander in whose charge a treasure had been placed, since he might still think he had a right to preserve it for the true owners, or at least for their heirs lawfully begotten and duly qualified. But this was no time for deliberation, and the prospect of gaining his wishes poured like a reviving cordial over the soul of the fisherman, and washed away his terror. "I would know," replied he, "where I can find the treasure with which your ship was laden."

"At the bottom of the sea," answered the captain with a groan, which was echoed by all his crew.

"At what place?" said Spiel,

"In the Nikkur Noss," replied the spectre.

"How came they there?" Inquired the Skerryman

"How came you here?" answered the captain.

"I came here," said Spiel.

"'T is false!" exclaimed the Spirit, "you came no further than the Peghts' Aultar Stane."

"I did not think of that," cried Trosk, whose eagerness for wealth did not allow him to think of any thing else; "but how shall I get them?"

"A goose would dive in the Nikkur Noss for a herring, thou idiot," answered Mynheer Vander Swelter; "are not the treasures of the Carmilhan worth a similar exertion?—Would'st thou know more?"

"Yes, how much shall I get?" said Spiel.

"More than you will ever spend," replied the captain, and the little man grinned behind Trosk's head, and the whole company laughed loud.

"Hast thou done with me?" said the commander.

"Yes, I have," answered Spiel Trosk. "Thanks, and fare thee well!"

"Farewell, till we meet again," said Mynheer Vander Swelter, facing about and marching off, preceded by his musicians, and followed by his officers, passengers, and crew, all puffing their pipes in majestic solemnity.

Again the grave music was heard winding down the dell accompanied by the words of the psalm, and the fisherman marked the notes grow fainter and fainter, till at length they were lost in the murmur of the waves.

All the rest of the night Spiel spent in struggling to get free from his envelope, for he was anxious to commence his search for the treasures by the break of day. At length, towards dawn, he extricated one arm from its confinement, and with that unbound the ropes that encircled the hide.

The pleasure with which he once more rose upon his feet was considerable, but it was lessened when he perceived an eagle tearing open the bowels of the ill-fated Luckie, and recollected the grief of Petie for her death, and his strange behavior on the occasion. The intention, however, of enriching this friend of his youth, seemed to him ample compensation for his loss, and he looked for the Stane, which was not now by the side of the carcass. He saw nothing but fragments of rock lying around, and supposing that it had been shattered to pieces, though scarcely waiting to think at all, he hurried towards the cabin of his partner with the greatest precipitation.

Petie was lying on the ground, in a state of stupefaction; he was clothed, and Trosk, from a glance at his bed, perceived that he had not been in it during the night and imagined that he had sunk on the earth the instant he had reentered the cottage. It was not without infinite difficulty that the impatient fisherman recovered his gentler partner, and, when he did revive him, the joy of Winwig knew no bounds. Even Luckie—poverty—every thing, was forgotten in his delight at seeing Spiel alive and well. But the narrative, or rather the broken and disjointed sentences uttered by Trosk, soon dissipated this glimpse of happiness. "Dive in the Nikkur Noss!—dive like a cormorant in the Nikkur Noss!" was all he could exclaim, while his cheek resumed its paleness, and his teeth again became set firmly against each other. "I would dive into a whirlpool," cried Spiel, looking round upon the bare walls of the cottage, now deprived of all the marks of humble affluence they had formerly shown, "rather than see *this.*—No," he continued, "whether you follow or desert me, I will go;" and with these words he seized a torch, a tinderbox, and a rope, and darted forward.

Petie immediately set out after him, calling to him not to obey the counsel of the fiend, and reiterating all he had said on former occasions; but to little purpose, for Spiel resolutely kept so far ahead of him as not to hear his arguments, and, having reached the yawn, he leaped down to the shelf, where he had formerly rested, and pulled off his jacket. He then lit his torch, made fast the rope, and by its aid was beginning to descend, when Petie arrived. By this time the resolution of Winwig had again given way to the haste and energy of Trosk, and, without speaking, he also was prepared to descend; but he was stopped by his companion, who, in his usual commanding manner, bade him stay where he was, and aid him to go down by holding and steadying the rope.

A man less daring and determined than Trosk, would, under any circumstances, have found the descent impossible; the crags were slippery, and the rocks crumbled in his grasp, but avarice was his spur, and hope his guide, and by dint of perseverance and resolution he passed by every obstacle. The Nikkur Noss was at all times a retreat for turbulent waves and murmuring winds, which seemed to seek its obscurity, to vent their rage in secret: but now unusual quiet reigned through the long tunnel, and when the Shetlander alighted on a projecting ledge, just above the level of the water, there was less uproar echoing through the vault than he had ever known. He immediately trimmed his torch, and looking down upon the stream that poured through the channel saw nothing but a dark flow of water, eddying along, covered with froth and large bubbles. For a moment he considered how he should proceed, and he looked up to the high rough arched ceiling, in wonder at its craggy surface, and at the pendant stalactites that hung dripping from every point. He turned again to the water, and saw along its edge large sea-nettles, whose red and blue tentacula glittered in the light that he held in his hand. At length, with the impatience that had brought him there, he resolved to dive and search the bottom, through the whole of its length, and he laid his torch on the rock to prepare himself. Whilst stripping, he fancied he saw something gleam through the water beneath where the link was placed, and being ready he plunged at once, and grasped a heavy body which he brought up.

It was a small iron bound box, but the rust had eaten into its hinges, and applying force the lid came off, and discovered a mass of golden coin. There was enough to have enriched the finder and his partner for their lives, and Petie loudly entreated Spiel to ascend, and tamper no longer with danger; but Trosk only looked upon what he had gained as the first fruits of his long labors. He drew in his breath for another dive, though a rush of angry waves had rolled through the gulf, and the wind had begun to bellow. He stepped down to the water's edge, but started for he heard the word Carmilhan uttered with a titter, as he had often heard it whispered. He looked round and saw nothing, and smiled at his own imagination. He cast his eyes on the casket of ducats, and felt reanimated. Again he disappeared beneath the surface of the water—but he never rose again. A wild laugh re-echoed through the vault as he went down, and only a few bubbles came up at the place where he had plunged in.

Petie returned alone, but he returned an altered man. His mind had given way under the repeated shocks it had received, and he gradually sunk into a state of idiocy. He paid no more attention to fishing, or to husbandry; every thing about him went to decay; he sold his boat and all he possessed, to support himself, and his only pleasure or recreation consisted in wandering about the sides of the Voe, or ascending the Nikkur Noss, muttering to himself, or looking anxiously into vacancy, as if he expected to see the spirit of Mynheer Vander Swelter start up from behind every stone. From this conduct he soon acquired the name of daft Petie, and he became an object both of pity and of terror to his countrymen, who, however, quickly abandoned the coast, to which he used principally to resort, as a place infested by beings of another world.

Now comes the most singular part of my story; for it is so well attested that I know not how to doubt it, though it is so improbable that my reason will not allow me to give credit to it. One dark and windy night, a fisherman had been driven by stress of weather to take shelter in the Voe, near which the cottage of Winwig was situated. He had just moored his boat, and was preparing to cross the heath to the village, when he saw a vessel bearing down towards the coast, avoiding all the rocks and shoals, and standing as boldly in as if she could sustain no damage from those dangerous and secret enemies.

The fisherman stood amazed at this unexpected sight. Heaven only knows how many ideas of storm ships and flying Dutchmen crossed his mind. At length he recollected himself sufficiently to be aware, that whatever the stranger might be, he had time enough to get out of the way, and he was preparing to fly when he saw a figure, which notwithstanding the darkness, he recognised as Petie, moving along in the path he intended to have pursued, brandishing his arms, and muttering to himself, as was common with him in his nocturnal wanderings.

The superstition of the islanders had attached a degree of terror to the person of Petie, which certainly, his still portly form and mild countenance could not otherwise have inspired; and the fisherman, alarmed and hesitating between the two objects of horror, had only sufficient sense left to throw himself on the ground, and crawl behind a small rock, which stood upon the shore, at a little distance from the foot of a cliff, where he hoped he might lie concealed till the danger was over. From this confined situation he could neither see nor hear any thing for some time, during which the winds arose and the sea became more agitated. At length, he, too, fancied he heard voices on the air, and shortly he found himself surrounded by a ghostly crew, who encircled him with glowing pipes and gleaming eyes, but in unbroken silence.

For a long time this sight so terrified the Shetland fisherman, that, his tongue so cleaved to the roof of his mouth, that, though he longed to mutter out a prayer or an adjuration, he felt himself unable to articulate, and, when he did speak, he could not recollect one word of the exorcism he had been meditating, but could only inquire, in the most brief and hurried terms, who his visiters were. He was answered immediately.—A figure, which he instantly recognised as Spiel Trosk, followed by another, which he knew to be Winwig, stepped before the rest and said,—"I am Spiel Trosk, boatswain's mate of the good ship Carmilhan—will you enter among our crew?" At this instant, and before the Shetlander could find words for his intended refusal, a loud laugh resounded behind his head; he turned his eyes involuntarily, and beheld the little figure in the yellow jacket and red cap, grinning diabolically.—This was too much—he could not bear it, and he fell back in a swoon.

When he revived the morning had broken, but there was no trace left of the Carmilhan and her crew. The man, who is always described as a sensible and steady fellow, was so well convinced of the reality of his vision, that he voluntarily made oath of it before the proper authorities; but he was not believed, or at least he was supposed to have fallen asleep, and dreamed of ghosts, till it was observed that Winwig was missing. This, indeed, made some stir, and the strictest inquiries were set on foot for him; but he could never be found; and it was supposed by the judicious, that in a fit of insanity he had thrown himself into the sea; but the superstitious maintain that he, too, was at length, persuaded to dive for the treasures of the Carmilhan—that he perished, and that his ghost now forms one ot the spectral crew; and, in proof of this assertion, it is said that both he and Trosk, together with a motley crowd of Dutchmen, have been seen more than once haunting the Voe and the promontory of the Nikkur Noss.

ed him for saving his life, by casting out his nets just at the proper time. "If you feel yourself indebted to me," said Judar, "you will perhaps, in return, let me know the history of your two predecessors, and of these two fishes."

"The two drowned Mughribins," said the third, "were my brothers; the one was named Abdussalím, the other Abdussamad: the Jew, as you supposed him, but who is no more one than you are, but a good Mussulman, is my third brother, and named Abdurrahim. Our father was a profound magician, deeply skilled in every branch of hidden knowledge. He left us an immense fortune, which after his death we divided equally; but could not agree to whom should belong his manuscripts, containing all the secrets of talismans, and the keys of all concealed treasures. Dissensions began to arise among us, when the shaikh who had been our father's instructer in the magic and cabalistic arts, offered himself as arbiter, saying: 'My children, this book belonged to me, and let him of you who would possess it, go and open the treasures of Shamardal, and bring me from thence the artificial sphere, the sword, the box of kohol, or collyrium for the eyes, and the seal; the seal is guarded by a powerful genius. Over him who possesses it kings and princes have no power; and, if he wishes, he can make the whole world obey him. The sword destroys entire armies in a moment. The artificial sphere shows what passes in every place on the globe; you need only turn it round, to see all that you wish; if you wish to burn a town, lay a spark of fire on the place where it is marked on the sphere, and fire will consume it immediately, and so on in every other respect. In the last place, he who rubs his eyes with the kohol will see all the riches concealed beneath the earth. But to open the treasures of Shamardal, the children of the Red King must be first possessed, who, however, live in the depths of the Birket ul Kárún. Your father sought to get them in vain; and it is only after long calculations that I have discovered it to be indispensably necessary, that a young man of Cairo, named Judar, should cast him into the lake who wishes to get possession of those fishes. He who dies in the attempt will float with his feet above the water, and he who succeeds will show his hands above the surface first.

"We all three determined to try this adventure, our fourth brother preferring to remain a merchant at Cairo; and agreeing, in the event of our failure, to purchase the mule, which was to be sent to him as a signal of our death. The fate of my two brothers you know; and I, I have been fortunate enough to catch the children of the Red King, who are powerful genii, under the form of coral fishes, as you see. But, in order to obtain the treasure itself, it is yet requisite for you to go with me to Fez and Mequinez."—"That," replied Judar, "I would willingly do, were I not bound to support my mother and brothers."—"If that be all," answered the Mughribin, "here are a thousand dínárs, to keep them from starving, and in four months you will be at home again, with riches enough for your whole life." Judar gave the thousand dínárs to his mother, bade her farewell, and set forth, seated on the mule behind the Mughribin.

When they had travelled some little time, Judar remarked that they had no provisions with them: "you have forgotten the kitchen," said he. "Are you hungry?" returned the Mughribin. Judar replied in the affirmative. "Well, we will dismount, give me the portmanteau. Say, now, what you will have?"—"Some bread and a piece of cheese."—"Bread and cheese!" said the Mughribin, "have you no better taste than that?"—"Well then, a roasted fowl—"—"Good!"—"Rice and boiled meat."—"Good!"—"Tarts."—"Good again!" Thus Judar went on, till he had named four-and-twenty different dishes, the Mughribin still crying "Good!" to every one. "That is enough, surely," said Judar, "let us now see where they are to come from." The Mughribin immediately drew from his portmanteau a golden dish, with a roasted chicken upon it: and so, one after another, brought out the whole twenty-four dishes which Judar had called for; and after they had dined, having taken out also a basin and ewer of gold, and washed, he replaced the whole in the portmanteau, and mounted the mule again. "How far, think you," said the Mughribin, "have we got on our journey now?"—"I know not," replied Judar, "but we have been about two hours on the way."—"Right!" returned the Mughribin; "however, we have travelled over a distance that usually requires a month. This mule is a genius, who in one day will perform a twelvemonth's journey. For your convenience, I have restrained his speed a little." In this way, the portmanteau supplying all they wanted, they proceeded till, on the fifth day, they arrived at Mequinez.

Every one courteously saluted the Mughribin, as he passed to his own house; where a maiden, beautiful as the sun, and languishing as a thirsty gazelle, opened the door to him; and said to the mule, after taking the portmanteau from its back, "Return thither from whence thou camest." The earth instantly opened, and then closed again upon the mule. "God be praised," said Judar, "that I am well off the back of such a steed!" His eyes were dazzled at the splendor and immense wealth displayed in the saloon they had entered. "Rahmah," said the Mughribin to his daughter, "bring me the búgchah."* From this he took a vest, worth at least a thousand dínárs, and put it upon Judar, and then set out the table with twenty-four different dishes, as before. Thus he continued for twenty days to present his guest every morning with a dress of equal value, and every evening to regale him with as well supplied a banquet. On the twenty-first day, the Mughribin ordered two mules to be saddled, in order to set out for the treasury of Shamardal. Arriving at a marshy pool, they dismounted on its banks; a tent was pitched, in which were put two cases, containing the coral fishes; and the slaves being sent back with the mules, the Mughribin began his exorcisms, which he continued till the cases opened, and the fishes came forth, saying, "Master of the world! what dost thou command?"—"I will destroy you both," answered the Mughribin, "if you do not open the treasury of Shamardal to me."—"It shall be done," continued they, "on condition that Judar, the fisherman, be there; for it is written in the book of fate, that in his presence only shall it be done." Upon this, the Mughribin took a plate of onyx and a censer; he laid the fishes on the plate, and strewed perfumes upon the censer.

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* A kind of portmanteau, of cloth or leather.

"Now," said he to Judar, "now I must, before all things, teach you what you have to do; for when I have begun to burn the perfume in the censer, I shall not be able to speak to you. As I continue to burn more and more frankincense, this water will, by degrees, dry up, and at the bottom of the pool you will see a gate of gold; knock at it three times, and you will hear a voice call aloud, 'Who knocks at the door of this treasury?' Then answer, 'It is I, Judar, the fisherman, by whom it is decreed to be opened.' Upon this, the porter will come forth and say, 'Stretch out your neck, that I may strike it with my sword, and see whether you be the true Judar.' This command of his you must obey; if you stretch out your neck, no harm will happen to you; but if you are afraid, and refuse to do it, he will infallibly kill you. When you have thus destroyed this first enchantment, you will find at the second door a horseman with couched lance; present your bosom to him boldly, and you will see the phantom vanish. At the third door it will be exactly the same, nor must you seek to avoid the arrow which the keeper of it will aim at you. When you knock at the fourth, seven monsters will rush out, and appear ready to devour you; fly not before them, but offer them your hand, and they will immediately disappear. At the fifth door, you will find a black slave, who will say, 'If you be Judar, open the sixth door!' and this will open of itself, as soon as you pronounce the names of Moses and Jesus: two dragons, the one on the right, the other on the left, will then cast themselves in your way, and open their monstrous jaws: but if you step by them without fear, you will reach the seventh door. Here you will see your mother come out, who will say, 'Welcome, my son! come, let me embrace thee!' But you must say to her, 'Begone! or I will kill thee!' then, drawing your sabre, threaten to slay her on the spot, if she does not strip off her clothing. When this has been done; you can enter the treasury, where you will see the magician Shamardal, sitting on a throne of gold, with a shining crown upon his head, the sword in his hand, and the magic seal-ring upon his finger; the box of kohol hangs before him from a golden chain. You will possess yourself of these things without difficulty, and return safely to me, provided you exactly follow the directions I have given you. As for the rest, depend only upon Divine Providence."

The Mughribin now began to burn the incense, with many mysterious words. The water dried up, the first gate became visible, and all happened exactly as he had foretold, till Judar arrived at the seventh door, from which he saw his mother approach. All the preceding dangers and enchantments he had easily surmounted; but he felt that he should be moved, when he had to strip his mother of her clothes.

However, he took courage, and threatened to kill her if she did not give him all her garments; she obeyed till she came to the last, when she said, "My son! you will not surely deprive me of this one covering; it would violate all decency; no one can have commanded that!"—"You are right, mother!" replied Judar, "keep it, that cannot do harm." He had scarcely uttered these words, when she cried, "Strike him!" and he felt himself surrounded by the invisible genii of the treasure; their blows fell on him thick as hail; in an instant he repassed the seventh door, which closed behind him: the water returned, and he was cast, half dead, at the Mughribin's feet. "Did I not tell you," said he to Judar, "that all would end badly, if you yielded to false scruples? All is over now for this year; a new trial cannot be made till the next." They returned to Fez, and, at the same season the ensuing year, repaired to the spot again. The Mughribin exhorted Judar anew to show no delicacy to the deceptive form of his mother; and he accordingly now made no scruple of compelling her to strip entirely, and just as she was about to give up the last part of her dress, the phantom vanished. Judar entered the treasury, took possession of the artificial sphere, the sword, the ring, and the box of kohol, and departed with them amid the acclamations of the spirits of the treasury.. He gave them to the Mughribin, who thanked him, and requested him to say what he desired as his reward. "I want nothing," said Judar, "but your wonderful portmanteau."—"With all my heart, my child," said the Mughribin; "but as that only supplies food, I will give you another full of gold and diamonds, which will enable you to provide for all your family, and to begin trade yourself: I will give you a mule and slave to conduct you home also; but on your return, be careful to reveal nothing of what has passed." Judar now took leave of the Mughribin, and, after a long journey, arrived safe at the door of his own house in Cairo. He found his mother sitting, dejected and melancholy, in a corner, and the place stripped of every piece of furniture. "What are you doing, mother?" said he: her surprise and joy at the sight of him for some time deprived her of utterance; at length she related to him, how his dissolute, ungrateful brothers had squandered away the money which he had given her, and left her almost to starvation. "Ah! but to remedy that," replied Judar, "I have here a portmanteau, which supplies, whenever called upon, the most delicious banquets in the world!"—"Is this a time to jest?" continued his mother, "do I not see that it is empty?"—"Jesting apart, dear mother," said Judar, "what do you wish to have?"—"Bread, my dear son!"—"Bread! you shall have a better meal than that, mother—roast mutton, rice, gourd-sallad, bakliwah, and sherbet."—"Enough! enough!" cried his mother, thinking he was mocking her. Judar repeated the words which the Mughribin had taught him, and then drew out all the different dishes he had named. His mother, to her great astonishment, was now informed by him how this wonderful portmanteau had been procured; but he begged her earnestly not to divulge the story. His brothers came to welcome him home, and were invited to take their places at his well supplied table; after they had dined, they would fain have put by what remained for supper, but Judar ordered it to be given to the poor, promising them a fresh meal; and at night he entertained them sumptuously indeed. He kept them thus ten days successfully. "Faith!" said the two worthless wretches, our brother has become a magician, to entertain us thus, without the least supply in the kitchen." Taking advantage one day of his absence, they drew the secret from their mother. The envy and vexation which they felt at this, inspired them with the idea of getting rid of Judar, who they believed would be no longer necessary to them, if they could but get possession of the portmanteau. For this purpose they repaired to Suez, where they soon found the master of a ship, who dealt in slaves, and having deceived him with a story, of their having a worthless fellow of a brother, who was ruining his family, agreed to sell Judar to him for forty dínárs. It now remained to find a good opportunity of delivering Judar into his hands.

The two brothers therefore begged Judar to allow them to bring three of their friends with them to supper. To this he made no objection, but provided them an elegant repast; when their mother had withdrawn, the three men, assisted by the two brothers, fell upon Judar, gagged him, took him up, and carried him to Suez, where he worked a whole year as a slave. In the meantime, his brothers had made their mother believe that the three guests were Mughribins, who had taken Judar away with them to search for new treasures. She wept bitterly upon hearing this, and they insulted and ill-treated her for the tears she shed for Judar's absence. They divided between them the gold and diamonds, but could not agree about the possession of the portmanteau. In vain did their mother propose that they should leave it with her, engaging to supply them from it with whatever they desired at any time. They continued to wrangle about it, and the dispute, in the course of the night, rose so high, that the guard passing by, and hearing the noise, stopped at the door and overheard every word the two brothers said to each other.

In the morning the officer of the watch repaired to the king Shamsaddaulah, and informed him of the whole affair. The king immediately ordered the two brothers to be brought before him, took from them the portmanteau, and the gold and diamonds, cast them into prison, and allowed a certain sum for the support of their mother.

Meanwhile, the vessel on board of which Judar was detained after having worked as a slave for a whole year, suffered shipwreck on the coast of Arabia. A merchant passing by felt compassion for his destitute condition, and took him with him to Jidda, and from thence to Mecca. As he was performing his devotion there, he met his old friend the Mughribin, shaikh Abdussamad. Judar, with tearful eyes, recounted to him his unhappy fate. The Mughribin listened to him with great commiseration; presented him with a handsome vest, and then proceeded to examine his magic tablets, to discover Judar's future destiny. "Be of good cheer," said he, "your misfortunes are over—your brothers are in prison—your mother in health—and all will henceforth prosper with you." Upon this he took from his finger the ring of Shamardal, saying to Judar, "Here is something for you; you know that the genius of this ring is ready to fulfil your orders, be they what they may: take it, you are now its master."—"I desire nothing more fervently," said Judar, "than to be again at home."—"Well," replied the Mughribin, "you need then only call upon the genius; and so farewell!" Judar called upon the genius of the ring, and was carried in a moment to the door of his mother's house. Delighted as she was at his return, she related, in great distress of mind, how much she feared for the lives of his brothers, who were yet in prison. "Be not concerned on that account, mother," said he, "you shall soon see them again in perfect safety." He then ordered the genius of the ring to bring his brothers thither. When they appeared before Judar, they were in great confusion and wept for shame.—"Weep not," said he, "the demon of avarice tormented you, and suggested this evil deed against your brother; but I forgive you, as Joseph forgave his brethren for casting him into the pit." He then recounted his adventures, and inquired how the king had treated them. They told him that, after taking from them the portmanteau and their gold and jewels, he had ordered them to be bastinadoed. "We will soon have all again," said Judar, and, calling on the genius of the ring, he commanded him not only to bring all the treasures of the king to him, but to build him that night a magnificent palace, and furnish it splendidly. The genius called together his companions, and before the sun rose the palace was completed. Quite satisfied with it, he gave it to his mother as a residence, and ordered the genius to procure forty black, forty white, and as many Abyssinian and Circassian slaves. The females he appointed to attend his mother, and the males for the service of himself and his brothers, who acted as his viziers, he himself playing the part of a sovereign. In the meantime the keeper of the royal treasure, on entering the rooms where it was kept, was overwhelmed with surprise to find them utterly empty; for the genius had not only carried off the portmanteau and jewels that belonged to Judar, but also every other article in the treasury.

On being informed of this unaccountable discovery, the king was equally surprised and enraged. He ordered the divan to be assembled, and informed them that he had now not a single piece of money in his possession. No one knew what to advise: the officer of the police, who had given information of the dispute of the brothers, alone ventured to speak. "Sire," said he, "still more extraordinary things have occurred; as I went my rounds last night I heard the noise of mallets and hammers, of saws and trowels, and, with the rising sun, beheld a splendid palace, of which the evening before not a sign was to be seen. I inquired by whom it was inhabited, and was told by Judar, his mother, and his two brothers, who have escaped from prison."—"Let these wretches, this Judar and his brothers, be immediately brought before me," cried the king, transported with anger. "Will your majesty allow me to suggest, that you should not take any precipitate step in this affair?" interrupted the vizier. "What then would you advise to be done?" demanded the king. "I should recommend you to entrap him by apparent kindness," replied the vizier: "let your majesty invite him to court, and then call him to account respecting his fortune, thus made in one night."

Upon this the king despatched one of his emirs, who entertained a high opinion of his own ingenuity. When he arrived at the gate of the palace, he found the chief of the eunuchs sitting there upon a throne of gold; but he neither came to meet him, nor even rose at his approach. This chief of the eunuchs was the genius of the ring himself. The emir, offended at this want of respect, insulted him, and was about to strike him with his steel mace, for he knew not that he had a genius to deal with. The latter, however, soon forced the mace from his hand, and applied it to his shoulders; the attendants of the emir unsheathed their swords to defend their master, but the genius soon put them to flight, and quietly resumed his place. The emir, with one eye bound up, and his back sorely bruised, threw himself at the foot of the throne. The king, filled with anger at the sight, despatched first one hundred, then two, and at last three hundred of his guards; but they were all baffled by the chief of the eunuchs, who, however, did them no injury that he could avoid.

"Sire," said the vizier, "by force we shall never gain our end; I will go myself to the palace as a minister of peace." He then, clad in white, and without any attendants or arms, approached the gate of Judar's palace. Having saluted the chief of the eunuchs, he requested to be announced to his master, to whom he had brought, he said, an invitation from the king. Judar received him courteously, and presented him with a robe superior to any in the king's possession. On his return to the royal palace he reported all that had passed; the king said, "Why then he is far greater than I am: I will go immediately and pay him the first visit." Mounting his horse, and surrounded by his guards, he proceeded straightway to the palace of Judar, who, when he was informed of the monarch's approach. called on the genius of the ring to supply him also with a well-appointed guard, who were ranged in two lines in the court of the palace. The king trembled when he observed their warlike appearance; he passed through them, and entered the hall where Judar sat, but he neither rose to receive him nor desired him to be seated. "Your majesty," said Judar, "should never forget that a monarch degrades himself when he plunders and vexes his people without cause." The king, who was of a timorous disposition, was much alarmed at the tone of these reproaches. He however excused himself with as much eloquence as he could command, and Judar was mollified, gave him his own kaftan, and requested him to dine with him.

On the king's return to his own palace, he closeted himself with his vizier, to consult what was to be done with a man who possessed such dangerous power. "I fear," said he, "that he will soon aspire to my crown itself."—"Sire," returned the vizier, "you need not, I think, concern yourself much upon that point; of what value can your crown be to him who is in power above all the princes of the world? But if you fear him, unite him to your family by the bands of marriage; you have a daughter of a marriageable age."—"You are a good politician, my dear vizier," replied the king, "and I will confide to you the direction of this delicate affair."—"If your majesty," said the vizier, "will follow my advice, invite Judar to the palace, and while he is with you let your daughter pass the door of the chamber swiftly; swiftly I say, that she may the more excite his curiosity. As Judar is of a romantic and vivid imagination, rely upon it he will be desperately in love with a beauty of whom he will have seen so little. He will ask me who she is, and I shall tell him the princess your daughter. I shall then be able to lead him on to ask her of you for a wife, and you will thus be able to live in happiness with him as your son-in-law."—"You are right," answered the king, and gave immediate orders for preparations for a splendid feast, to which Judar was invited. Dressed in all that could set off her natural charms, the princess passed before the door of the room where Judar was dining with the king her father. Scarcely had Judar seen her when he gave a deep sigh, and appeared to be much agitated. "What is it that disturbs you?" said the artful vizier. "Ah!" replied Judar, "the beauty who passed just now has seized on my heart, and bewildered my head!"—"That beauty," returned the vizier, "is the king's daughter; and I am certain that were you to ask her of him, no difficulty would be found in effecting the union; but should you feel any hesitation, I will take upon myself to make proposals for you to the king." Then turning to that monarch, he addressed him thus:—"Sire! Judar wishes to draw the bands of friendship which now exist between you yet closer by those of relationship. He loves your daughter, and will gladly give whatever you may require for a portion."—"My daughter," said the king, "is at his command." The next day was then chosen for the marriage, which was celebrated with great splendor.

Soon after this the king died, and the divan unanimously offered the crown to Judar, by whom it was accordingly accepted. He built a mosque and endowed it richly; and the quarter of the city where his palace stood is yet called by his name. His brothers, who were his viziers, however, still felt envy gnawing at their hearts; they could not endure the thought of being their brother's servants, and formed a conspiracy for his destruction. For this purpose, having invited him to a superb feast, they gave him poison. Hardly had it begun to operate when Selim, taking the ring from Judar, called upon the genius to destroy Salih, and then ordering the divan to assemble, declared himself, as possessor of the ring, possessor of the kingdom also. The grandees, too timid to resist, paid him their homage and proclaimed him king.

The first step of the new monarch's, after giving directions for the funeral of the late king, was to order preparations to be made for his own marriage with the widow. The divan in vain begged him to wait till the time of mourning was over. "I shall not concern myself about that," replied the tyrant, "she shall this night comply with my wishes." In consequence of this the marriage contract was drawn up, and the princess was informed of the king's design. "Let him come," said she, "I know how to receive him." Meeting him, therefore, with the greatest apparent kindness, she handed to him a cup of poisoned sherbet, and then taking the ring from his finger, and the magic portmanteau from the treasury, she reduced the former to powder and tore the latter to pieces, that none might again abuse the power which they conferred.

THE BOARWOLF.

"In that mountainous region called the Bergstrasse, which lies along the banks of the Rhine, it was formerly the custom for the young men, when they came to a certain age, to enrol themselves in a company of hunters, for the express purpose of pursuing and destroying wolves; for which reason the band was called the wolf-slaughterers. Indeed, that part of the country is so craggy, so full of caverns, and so crowded with woods, that it is the place in the world most fitted for the harbor of wild beasts, and accordingly, there were in former times a vast number to be found there; so many, in fact, that had not the wolf-slaughterers been very active, daring young men, it would have been almost impossible to have resided there; and it was only by their exertions, that the villagers of Fiendenheim were able to preserve any cattle. Many ages ago, and long before the invention of firearms, there were at the head of this band two young men, who were particularly successful in their attempts against the wolves. They were both strong, fearless, and well skilled in the use of their weapons, and they were considered as chiefs of the troop, because each had destroyed more wild beasts with his own hands than any other two belonging to it, although, between themselves, the number was equal; for if Hendrick, (so one was called,) at any time had the advantage, Wolfgang, the other, never desisted from the chase till he had brought home the head of a wolf, to reduce their conquests to the same level. This rivalry was, however, not the occasion of any enmity between these young men; for, as they had been brought up from children together, they were accustomed to strive for the same prizes, and engage in the same undertakings, so that they were always most pleased when both succeeded in the same degree. Indeed, it is said, that when one had the superiority, he always relaxed his exertions, till the other came up with him, and that they retained this habit in the chase; for Wolfgang has been known, after he had killed one beast, to miss the next purposely, that Hendrick might strike it, and Hendrick has done the same, when fortune was on his side. Another reason why there was no quarrel between them, perhaps, was, that they were both equally handsome. Not that they were alike in feature, though they were of the same height; for Wolfgang's beauty had a boldness in it, which Hendrick's wanted, but then

Hendrick's countenance was calm and interesting, and as their tempers agreed with their persons, each thought his own exterior the best, so that envy did not threaten to render their friendship of short duration. There is, however, always some stumblingblock in the way of perfect happiness, and this the friends met with.

"It chanced, one evening, whilst returning by themselves from the chase, bearing on the points of their spears the heads of two wolves, which they had just slaughtered, that they passed through a deep narrow glen, leading between high rocky banks, from the clefts of which grew out birch and mountain ash trees, in such numbers, as to overshadow their path, and give a wild gloom to the space beneath. They had not reached half way, when they heard a loud growl, and looking carefully round, espied a hideous monster, partly concealed amongst tall stones and low bushes. Wolfgang cried out, 'a boar! a boar!' and Hendrick exclaimed, 'a wolf! a wolf!' both preparing instantly to attack it. But the brute, which was employed in devouring its prey, after displaying a frightful pair of jaws, and making show of resistance, turned its tail, and fled through the underwood, hidden from their view, till it reached the mouth of the ravine, when springing suddenly out, it escaped into a more open country. The huntsmen, however, knowing that it must choose to fly through the gorge of the pass, or remain in the dell, had hurried that way, and were close at its heels, when it darted from the thicket. This gave them hopes, and giving full rein to their horses, they pursued it over a wide piece of heathy waste. They had now a good opportunity for ascertaining the nature of the animal they followed; but, notwithstanding their skill in the chase, they were unable to decide what kind of beast it was; for, though it had the straight back, bushy tail, and long gallop of a wolf, still it had the thick, bristly, and snouted head of a boar, and its feet were not similar to those of any animal they had seen. They, therefore, supposed it might be some mongrel brute, or one of the wild beasts brought from Syria, which had broken loose from the menage of the Archbishop of Mentz. But, be it what it might, they pushed after it with the greatest resolution, because, when they had started it from its lurking place, they perceived it had been tearing in pieces the body of a child.

"The direction which the monster took led them across a small stream, that divided their district from the neighboring one, and brought them at last into a place dangerous for horsemen, and difficult for the pursuit of game. It was an extensive level, reaching from the rivulet to a distant range of hills, and would have been a plain had it not been covered with huge masses of detached rock, scattered about it, as if a large mountain had been dashed to pieces, and strewed over its surface.

Many of the fragments were so large, that they resembled small cliffs, and from their tops and sides grew out and hung down trees and shrubs of every description. Several lay as if fallen against each other, so as to leave caverns and arches between their sides, and the red glare of the sun setting behind the hills, gleamed through these openings in a wild and beautiful manner. Other pieces were small and plentiful, lying in heaps, as well as separately, amongst the larger masses; so that, though there were many roads and passages between these rocks, still they were rendered unsafe for horses by these lesser stones.

" The hunters had scarcely entered this region before they lost sight of their game; but, hoping to regain the scent, they dashed forward amongst the pathways, and, after a short time saw the brute turning round the corner. This tempted them still further, till, after bewildering themselves amidst the intricacies of this desert, they gave over the pursuit, having ceased for some time to see the monster, and, indeed it was growing so dark, that they would not have been long able to view it had it been before them.

" They now thought of returning home to Fiendenheim, and turned their horses the way contrary to that which they had come, and, as they rode along, wondering what kind of beast they had chased, they found that their exertion had both fatigued them and made them excessively thirsty. Accordingly, they resolved to take a full draught from the stream when they reached it, and agreed to ask permission of the lord of that domain to bring their whole troop on the following day, to give full pursuit to so dangerous a monster. They were talking about the dogs and weapons they would bring with them, when they caught a glimpse of a light at a short distance, and wishing to obtain, if possible, something better than a draught of water, to quench their thirst, they made towards it, and arrived at the door of a residence, half cottage and half cavern, which stood under the side of one of the largest masses of rock; and they recollected that this place was the habitation of a hermit, a recluse so austere that he hardly ever suffered himself to be seen by any body.

" They knocked at the door, however, and it was opened, not by an old man, with a white beard, as they expected, but by a beautiful girl, of about sixteen, whose face and figure far excelled those of all the daughters of their native hamlet, and, in truth, of any other place they knew. She blushed at first, and seemed inclined to close the door again, but Wolfgang asked, in a tone of compliment, that she would give him a draught of milk, and Hendrick seconded him, with such gentle supplication, that she felt almost compelled to speak; and, then, not liking to refuse so small a request, she brought out a large jug, not of milk but of true Rhenish wine, which she poured out into horns, and offered to each of the huntsmen. They accepted her gifts with many thanks, which she received with smiles; and by way of prolonging the conversation, they inquired whether she had seen or heard of any strange beast near her habitation. She replied, that, within the few last days, her father had told her that he had seen an animal that he had never seen before, and had bidden her be careful that she was not surprised, for that it was very ferocious, and had carried off the child of one of the inhabitants of the village of Grifhausen. She then invited them to alight, saying that, perhaps, her parent could tell them more concerning it.

"The young men were both so fascinated with this beauty, that they would willingly have spent some hours in gazing at and conversing with her; but, for some reason or other, they obstinately refused, although she pressed them to enter the cottage. After a little more conversation she wished them good night; and though they both intended to see her again, neither of them mentioned a word of his intention, either to her or to his companion. Indeed, from that moment they became so desperately jealous of each other, (which was the reason why they would not stop that night, each looking upon the other as a rival,) that they scarcely spoke all the way back to Fiendenheim; and the next day, instead of summoning the troop to give the beast chase, each rode separately in search of the cottage, where they met, and quarrelled for the first time; and so bitter was their enmity afterwards, that it would have been a pleasure to either of them to have run the other through with a boar spear.

"Meantime the wild monster committed great ravages throughout the surrounding country, and it became unsafe for men unarmed, and women and children, to pass from one village to the other; so that there was a general alarm spread round about, for a great distance. The wolf-hunters made many attempts to destroy it, but in vain; for though it did not keep out of the way by day, yet it was so swift, and so artful in eluding pursuit that all their endeavors were fruitless. Even Wolfgang and Hendrick could gain no advantage over their companions, except getting a little closer to the beast than the rest. At length, the lords of three villages, which this animal infested, fancying that there might be some want of energy in the attempts to destroy it, or, perhaps, a little fear, offered a reward of a piece of land to the man who should produce its head, 'to belong to him and his heirs for ever,' besides the privilege of choosing the fairest maiden within their domains as a wife, to whom they also promised a portion.

"This offer produced a great commotion among the young men of the three villages, as well as among the maidens; all of them being willing to obtain the reward; but upon Wolfgang and Hendrick it had a very strong effect. Since first beholding the young beauty among the rocks, they had both striven to gain her as a wife, but, though she gave them equal audience, she declared positively in favor of neither of them. But when the reward was offered for the head of the beast, she said she would willingly give her hand to the huntsman who should obtain it. Thus, besides the hope of obtaining the reward, and the beauty, there was the fear that another should gain her, and Wolfgang said, that he would rather the beast should tear him to pieces, than that Hendrick should become possessed of her, and Hendrick said much the same of Wolfgang. Nevertheless, the monster continued his ravages, though all the country was in arms against him, and it was at length reported, that Count Albert of Fiendenheim was going to invite all the knights and warriors of his acquaintance, to come and make a grand attempt to rid his lands of such a scourge.

"When it came to be known that Wolfgang and Hendrick had quarrelled, the inhabitants of their village were anxious to know the cause of disagreement between two such strict friends, and they soon found it out. But when the young men of Fiendenheim had seen the damsel, they said they could find nothing in her so enchanting, that there were many girls in their own hamlet far superior to her, and in fact, that she was more disagreeable than pleasing. On the other hand, the two huntsmen had told their sisters that there could not be a greater beauty among women, that her countenance was delightfully fascinating; her eyes of the most brilliant black, her lips glowing coral, her nose finely formed, her complexion radiant with health, and her curling tresses of the loveliest auburn. This, of course, tempted many of the young women to make an opportunity of seeing her, and they agreed with the young men, that she was any thing but agreeable. They found her features sharp and vixen-like, her eyes too small, and glowing more like live coals than diamonds, her nose hooked, her complexion of a peculiar sallow, and her locks elfish, snake-like, and of a fiery red color. Her shape, which they had been told was exquisite, they thought too flimsy, and her dress was so gaudy and scanty, that they agreed she resembled one of the lost girls who wandered about the streets of Mentz, to tempt young men to their ruin, more than a modest inhabitant of the district of Brockencragg; and, in fine, they all agreed that she had infused some philter into the wine she had given to Wolfgang and Hendrick, and thereby deprived them of the right use of their senses and understanding. But, what displeased them more than any thing else, was that she refused to tell from whence she came, or who her father was, nor would she listen to any inquiries about her family, saying, that those who liked her need not know her friends, and that those who disliked her should not.

"Wolfgang, as I have already said, was of a temper somewhat impatient, and when he heard that Count Albert purposed calling his friends to assist him, fearing he should lose an opportunity of at once acquiring the beauty, he mounted his horse, and set out on the chase, swearing he would never return without the head of the monster; and, accordingly, he tried every art he was acquainted with, to surprise it unawares, for when it was conscious of being pursued no body had any chance of coming up with it. All his address and toil, through the heat of the day, was, however, of no avail to him. Twenty times had he been on the point of plunging his short sword between its ribs, and as often had it slipped aside, and disappointed him. At last, towards evening, when all the rest, similarly engaged, had given up the chase, he fancied that the animal appeared lame, and exhausted with fatigue. Although he was scarcely otherwise himself, this idea dissipated all his weariness, and hoping that he might now run him down, he borrowed a fresh horse from the nearest house, and returning to where it lay, hid in its lair, he forced it to rise, and betake itself to that same plain over which he had first pursued it, in company with Hendrick. He had now no doubt that it was maimed, for it ran with a limping gait, and with less speed than before. However, it managed to keep him at too great a distance behind to wound it, and, taking the same course it had formerly done, it led him across the boundary stream, and among those wildly-scattered crags where it had once escaped before. But as Wolfgang had now more advantage than at that time, both in the freshness of his horse, and in the knowledge of the roads, which he had acquired by visiting the cottage, he was able to keep the boarwolf, (for so the monster was called by the peasantry,) in sight.

"The red glare of the setting sun was now again gleaming through the uncouth archways, and along the narrow passes of the rocks, as the impatient huntsman followed the brute into the centre of the great level. Here, entering upon a small sandy space, scattered over with fragments of stone and dead wood, Wolfgang lost sight of the animal, for, as it reached the plain before him, he could not decide the way it had taken. His temper, which had long been giving way during the pursuit, now totally forsook him, and throwing himself from his horse, he rolled upon the sand, cursing and blaspheming every thing that came in his mind. He lay thus employed, at last with his face towards the ground, when, fancying that he felt a strange gust of heat pass over him, he turned his head, and beheld the figure of a being somewhat human, but more resembling a devil. It had horns and a tail, its horns curled round its ears, and its tail was short and turned up like a hook. It was hairy all over, and its feet ended in hoofs, like those of a hog.

"Wolfgang was in too great a rage to tremble.

"'Wolfgang,' said the being, 'if you will give me power over you for four and twenty hours, you shall cut off the head of the boarwolf.'

"'I agree,' said the huntsman, without stopping one moment to consider.

"'Then kiss my hand, in token of obedience,' said the stranger.

"Wolfgang kissed the hand held out to him, and whilst he started back, for the touch of the being burnt his lips, it vanished, saying, 'chase the boarwolf to-morrow.'

"The huntsman now remounted his horse, and without allowing himself to think of what he had done, he hastened to the cottage of the beauty, with whom he staid conversing till daylight, for both she and her father treated him as if they could not treat him too well.

"At daybreak he saddled his steed, and set off to dislodge the boarwolf from its lurking place, impatient both to make sure of the rewards and to return home, for, as he had vowed not to go back without the head, so he had kept his word.

"When Wolfgang reached the glen, where he expected to meet the boarwolf, he found Hendrick there with some companions, who had risen early that morning to try the powers of two large dogs, which they had procured from a great distance. These were bloodhounds of a fine breed, and were now engaged by Hendrick, because all the other dogs that had been employed in the chase of this monster refused to follow it, being so terrified, that, whenever they were put upon the scent, they howled and slunk away in fear. Wolfgang, elated with the kindness so lately shown him by the beauty and her father, and relying on the promise that he should cut off the head of the boarwolf, could not refrain from uttering a loud laugh of contempt, when he saw the pains taken by his former friend and his associates. He even bid him, with a sneer, 'go home and look out for a wife, for that he meant to marry the beauty that night himself.' Hendrick was too intent on endeavoring to get scent of the wild beast, to reply to these insults, and having ascertained that it was not in the dell, he hurried over the hills in search of it; and his rival notwithstanding his security, not being willing that he should first start the game, set off to another spot, where he once or twice had met the animal.

"About an hour after this, Wolfgang unearthed the boarwolf. It sprung from beneath the root of an old withered yew-tree, which grew over a low dark cave, in the side of a bank, just as the sun rose brilliantly from behind some opposite hills; and when the ferocious brute opened its jaws, to utter a hindeous roar, its long tusks gleamed in the morning-rays, and the white foam spirted from its mouth like flakes of snow, while its bristly hide seemed to glitter in the light, as if throwing out sparks of fire. The eager huntsman rushed forward after it, eyeing with joy the ghastly grinning head, which he expected soon to sever from its huge, ill-fashioned carcass, and which was to form the foundation of his fortune, and the pledge of his union with his mistress. He forgot that Hendrick was also in the field with his friends, and their unerring dogs, or, if he thought of him, it was only to enjoy the anticipated mortification of his former friend, when he returned to the village, bearing with him the spoil for which they both thirsted so ardently.

"The boarwolf, however, as if conscious that its existence was to terminate that day, seemed resolved to exercise the strength and perseverance of its pursuer. It took wider and more intricate circuits than it ever had done before, it turned more frequently to bay and almost appeared to enjoy the eager onsets which the huntsman made to overcome it: but the horse of Wolfgang could only be brought to ride at it by the most strenuous endeavors of its master, exhibiting such evident marks of dismay at its glaring eye-balls, and erected bristles, that he could scarcely keep its head towards it; and when he offered to dismount, for the purpose of attacking it with his sword, the monster took the opportunity of making off at full speed.

"In this manner the chase continued till long past noon, by which time Wolfgang had become so faint, with hunger and exhaustion, that he could scarcely keep his seat; for he had been extremely fatigued the day before, and had not closed his eyes during the night, having been too much engaged with his mistress to think of sleep. Besides, he had scarcely tasted food since the morning of the day before, for he took nothing but wine at the hermitage, and this day he would not stop one moment to assuage his hunger at the cottages of his acquaintances, near which he passed, lest the boarwolf should escape, or have time to renew his strength by rest. However, he recollected that his mistress, when she heard that he intended to renew the chase early in the morning, had given him a small cake, which she had prepared during his stay, for she said that she was certain his eagerness would not allow him to think of refreshment, and that her gift would quell his appetite, and support his strength, till he had slain the monster. Upon this he drew the loaf from his pocket, and eat it, with many mental thanks for the kind attention of the giver, and he felt his desire to slaughter the boarwolf increase with his wish to obtain the hand of so amiable a girl. As she had said, so the cake, though small, satisfied his hunger, and renewed his spirits, or, rather, made them more buoyant than before. Indeed, so much did he feel elated, that he spurred on his horse as if just set off in the pursuit, and the monster was obliged to fly more quickly than it had ever done. But the weather, which had hitherto been brilliant and enlivening, now suddenly altered; large masses of dark clouds rolled up from behind the distant mountains, the wind rose, and swept along the edges of the woods with violence, full drops of rain fell at intervals, and the distant waters of the river were heard rushing along their rocky bed. Wolfgang was too much accustomed to the field not to know that these signs presaged a storm; but his ardor would not permit any idea of relinquishing the pursuit to enter his mind; besides, he fancied these signs were but preludes to the death of the boarwolf, and he gazed at it with exultation as, for the third time that day, it hurried through the dell where he and Hendrick had first discovered it. His spirits, now high, and free from fatigue, bore him along with a feeling of triumph, and though the wind shook the branches of the trees over his head, and sighed in the most threatening manner, he paid no attention to the impending tempest.

"At length, as he once more spurred along to the rocky level, the clouds burst above him, and a deluge of rain and hail surrounded him instantaneously; he seemed almost as if enclosed in a moving mass of water, and as the drops struck against the ground they broke into a fine mist, which rose up on the wind like a second shower, or as if the earth were heated and being quenched by the rain, while large hailstones flew and danced about in every direction, causing his horse to start repeatedly.

"So thick and heavy was the shower, that Wolfgang lost sight of the boarwolf for a short time, though it still kept at the same distance before him. But an unusual darkness now began to add to the horrors of the storm, not like the approach of night, but a deep gloom, as if the sun were losing its light. Thunder burst in loud peals amongst the hills, and flashes of lightning at times shot along before him. Yet all these combined terrors had no effect on the mind of the huntsman; at least he laughed at them with the feelings of a man intoxicated, for the few mouthfuls he had taken had produced a state of idea almost similar to the effect caused by liquor, without impeding his capability of bodily action. A hundred times he blessed the providence of the beauty, in providing against his fatigue, and he heard the swollen waters of the boundary stream foam amidst the stony windings of its channel, without one impression of fear, or suggestion of prudence.

"The boarwolf chose the widest whirlpool over which to leap, and Wolfgang sprung boldly over the boiling vortex. He heeded not the laboring breath and staggering limbs of his courser, but spurred him violently, as he entered the district of Brockencragg, along the path which led to the hermitage, for in that direction the monster proceeded before him.

"The storm raged with peculiar fury in this wild and desolate region. The wind roared hideously, as it rushed along the numerous passages amongst the rocks, and the summits of the tall trees, that grew upon them, were bent below the crevices in which their roots found nourishment. Twice did Wolfgang escape the fall of trunks, which were torn with harsh crashes from their beds, and many times was he nearly struck from his saddle by pieces of stone, broken from the margin of cliffs by the lightning, which now darted closely around him. But his spirit and his persuasion that the head of the monster would soon become his spoil, were unabated and unalloyed, till, just as he was approaching the cottage of his mistress, the boarwolf uttered a tremendous yell, which was answered by the distant bay of dogs. "That fiend Hendrick!' muttered Wolfgang, as the idea that his hated rival might rush in between him and his reward glanced across his mind. He spurred on his steed, more unmercifully than before, and was in an instant close by the hermitage. The beauty, as if fearless of wild beasts, of lightning, or of thunder, stood at the door, waving her hand in encouragement to her lover, and he thought she seemed to enjoy the flashes of fire that glanced along before her; her face was bright, and her eyes shone, her hair floated in the wind. He heard her say, "Do you hear Hendrick?" and in a moment was out of her sight and hearing, for, having turned a corner, the brute led him directly to the centre of the level. All the fury of the storm seemed likewise to tend that way, for the violence of the wind, rain, and hail, behind him, was almost intolerable. His horse rushed along, as if borne by a rapid stream, striving more to keep itself steady than to maintain its speed; the lightning flashed round every crag, and the thunder seemed rolling along upon the earth, and jarring at every instant with the scattered fragments of rock.

"Even these he fancied tottered as he passed them, and shook their crumbling edges on his head;—tittering and grinning whispers seemed to mock his ears, as he listened to the deep mouthings of Hendrick's blood hounds; and the boarwolf growled and tore up the earth, as it fled before him. However, he gained upon it, and, only intent upon the accomplishment of his wishes, drew forth his short sword, to make a desperate attack, for he perceived by its agitation and furious howls that it would soon turn to bay. He was close at its heels, as it entered upon the sandy space in the centre of the level, and at the instant the monster turned and offered resistance, his horse fell dead close beside it. The boarwolf sprung upon Wolfgang, and ripped up his thigh with its tusk; but the huntsman, though writhing with pain, struck a tremendous blow at its brawny neck, which cleft the spine, and the head hung from its shoulders. Another blow severed it completely; but at that instant a dense smoke, mingled with flame, issued from the carcass, and the boarwolf was changed into that fiend-like being whom he had seen in that same place on the day before.

" 'Wolfgang,' it exclaimed to the terrified hunter, 'thou hast cut off the head of the boarwolf; for twenty-four hours thou art mine.—Aye, and forever!—Be thou now a boarwolf!'

" 'Not now,' cried Wolfgang, gasping with horror at the thought, 'Hendrick is coming, he will slay me.'

" 'I mean it,' replied the demon laughing ferociously, 'I brought him here, his dogs are mine—see he comes!'

"Wolfgang turned his head and saw Hendrick rushing towards him; he felt his figure change, his hands became feet, his head grew large and bristly, he sunk down towards the earth, and stood like a four-footed brute, but bewildered and unable either to fly or resist.

The most bitter feelings of terror and despair overwhelmed his faculties. He sprung into the air, and attempted to scream with rage, but he only uttered a harsh hoarse roar, like a boarwolf. It was answered by Hendrick, who at that moment fixed his eye upon him, with a wild shout of joy; his friends also shouted, and the blood-hounds, giving a tremendous yell, sprung upon him and held him firmly with their teeth. Hendrick leaped from his horse, and raised his sword, and while Wolfgang vainly strove to exclaim, 'Spare me, Hendrick! spare me!' his rival and former friend smote off his head at a blow. His spirit fled with a groan, a dreadful clap of thunder shook the earth, a flash of lightning enveloped the group, and scathed the bleeding body of the huntsman; but Hendrick nevertheless lifted up the head, and with his companions gave three victorious shouts; he then thrust the point of his spear into the neck, and, remounting his horse, rode away from the plain with his associates, bearing before him, unconsciously, the head of his once dearest friend.

"They made their way directly to Fiendenheim, and were received joyfully by the villagers, who ran to inform Count Albert. The lord received the spoil in form, admiring its ghastly look, and directed his seneschal to make out the deed of gift, of four acres of land, to Hendrick the wolfslayer, to him and his heirs forever. He then bade the unfortunate huntsman choose the maiden he liked best for his bride, and bring her to him on the following morning, as he intended to bestow upon her a marriage portion.

"Hendrick, notwithstanding the fatigue he had undergone since daybreak, could not resist the pleasure of communicating his success to the beauty, and of claiming her promise. He therefore quitted Fiendenheim, and took the direction of the Brockencragg level, with almost as much speed as if engaged in another chase. The weather was now calm and serene, the wind had subsided, not a drop of rain fell from the unclouded sky, and a pure and beautiful evening had succeeded to the tempestuous afternoon; nor would it have been suspected that such a storm had so recently occurred, had not the swollen streams, that rushed amongst the rocks, and over the pathways, been unusually large, and their waters turbid, and loaded with fragments of branches, and the spoils of their banks.

"By the time the eager lover arrived within sight of the cottage of his mistress, the first stars of evening had appeared, and a gentle gloom had fallen on all the surrounding objects. A calm stillness was spread over the vast desert of shattered rocks, only interrupted by the croak of the raven, which sat among the overhanging trees, by the shriek of the owl, which floated forth from the recesses amongst the cliff. But of a sudden, as Hendrick spurred his horse up to the door of the hermitage, a strange wild shout of mirth burst from within the dwelling, composed of sounds and voices he had never heard before. The chimney, too, smoked violently, and a bright gleam of light shot from the casement across the pathway, and small rays issued from beneath the caves and crevices in the walls.

"Impatient and alarmed, Hendrick, with a lover's privilege, hastily opened the door, and entered; but what was his amazement to find himself in the midst of a company of beings of the most appalling description. There sat in the old chair, which the beauty's father was wont to occupy, the same fiend who had tempted Wolfgang to his destruction. Before him, in the midst of the floor, was a large fire, blazing up to the ceiling in blue flames, mingled with green and yellow. Around this danced a circle of devils, of all figures and sizes, throwing themselves into the most distorted attitudes, and shrieking at alternate intervals. There lay on the floor a human carcass, the head of which was concealed by a black veil, and the old fiend had his feet placed upon it, while his hoofs, now lengthened into claws, penetrated the flesh, and when the demon contracted his talons, the body gave convulsive throes, and dashed its limbs about, to the great diversion of the assembly.

"Hendrick stood and stared aghast at this sight, for a crowd of fears and suspicions overwhelmed his soul. He looked around for the beauty and her father, but in vain; till at length a tall slender fiend sprung from the circle towards him, and seizing his hand in her burning grasp, drew him forward, saying, 'Why, Hendrick my betrothed, do you not know your bride?'

"Hendrick gazed upon her, and saw in her sharpened features, parchment skin, and glowing eyes, some appearance of the girl who had been the sole object of his and Wolfgang's love; but with a shuddering start he endeavored to free himself from her grasp. She, however, held him tightly, and drawing him to the circle, another fiend caught him by the hand, in the same manner, and he was thus forced to dance round the fire, as one of the group, whilst the demons grinned and chattered at him, with fearful and malicious joy.

"Although the heart of Hendrick sunk within him, at the hideous figures and grimaces of his companions, his senses still remained collected, and his thoughts were bent on finding some method of escaping from this detestable spot. His love and hopes were converted into the utmost disgust and dread, and his eyes wandered from side to side, to avoid the diabolical leers and hellish mockery of the fiend who pretended to be his bride. She, however, seemed not to regard his hatred, but telling her crew that he was impatient for the conclusion of his nuptials, stopped opposite to the frightful demon who sat in the chair—

" 'Father,' said she, 'this is my bridegroom, he wishes you to unite us forever.'

" 'Have you the ring?' said the old fiend, in a harsh and hollow voice.

" 'This is the one he gave me,' said the pretended bride, holding forth one which Hendrick knew he had presented to her, some days before.

" 'Is he willing to bind himself to you and yours?' said the presiding devil of this infernal ceremony.

" 'You shall hear him promise,' answered the bride. 'Speak, Hendrick, love, speak,' continued she to the astonished huntsman, whose hair now stood on end, and whose limbs quaked beneath him, whilst the sweat stood cold upon his brow, although the room felt like a furnace.

" 'If he will not speak, let him kneel and do homage,' exclaimed Satan.

" At this the fiends on either side of the terrified hunter, strove to pull him down; but Hendrick, aware that by that prostration he should yield up his soul to the powers of darkness, resisted with his utmost strength, whilst he groaned loudly and wrestled with the demons.

" 'Show him, then,' cried the arch-demon, stamping with passion, 'show him what he shall become, unless he obeys. Let him see! let him see!—up Wolfgang up!' continued he, shouting hideously. Upon this the corpse that lay at the foot of the chair started from the floor, and as the black cloth fell from its head, Hendrick recognised the pale and bloody corpse of his friend Wolfgang. The head was resting on the shoulders, but there was a deep red gash round the neck, as if it had been divided.

" 'Dost thou know him?' cried the fiend-bride, as she saw her lover tremble involuntarily.

" 'Yes, he knows him,' cried the old demon, 'and shall be like him, unless he joins in the chase.' He then vociferated, 'the boarwolf! the boarwolf!' and the body of Wolfgang was changed into the resemblance of that monster, and began to run round the cottage, whilst all the imps and demons, uttering tremendous yells, pursued it, darting fire from their nostrils, and piercing the howling brute with their burning claws. Hendrick's two companions endeavored to pull him forward after the rest, and the principal fiend exclaimed, 'Force him! tear him! drag him!'—but the huntsman's feelings were wound up to a pitch of horror, and struggling violently, he exclaimed, 'God and St. Hubert protect me?' The fiends instantly screamed, and let him go, and he sprung through the fire, his only way to escape, and out at the door. In an instant he was on his horse, and in good time, for the whole legion of devils poured out of the cottage, with the boarwolf at their head.

"Hendrick dashed his spurs into the sides of his beast, and fled, and the frightful crew followed, filling the air with their vociferations. At every instant one or other of the demons seemed on the point of pulling him from his horse; they snatched at him, at his arms, at his neck, at his legs, and at his long flying dress, that floated on the air behind him. They called on him to stop; his bride offered to throw her arms round him, she shrieked in his ears, and blew fire from her mouth, she cursed and reviled him. But the huntsman still fled, and called on the saints to assist him, till reaching the boundary stream, he leaped his horse over its rapid current, and found himself free from his hateful persecutors. Nevertheless he checked not his bridle, but kept on his way till he reached the village of Fiendenheim, where he rushed in dismay up to a crowd of the inhabitants.

"The men of Fiendenheim shouted when they saw the successful huntsman, who had ridden forth in the anticipation of happiness, return so terrified, and the women screamed as they gazed at the man and horse, black with smoke, and dripping with perspiration. 'Is this the bridegroom?' cried they. 'Where is the bride?' Hendrick, for a long time, could not speak; at length, after drinking a deep and long draught to clear his throat, he told what he had seen. All the hamlet was in agitation. They ran to the castle of Count Albert, and clamoured to see the head of the boarwolf. The warder called for torches, and led the way into an inner court; but instead of the grim visage of the rapacious monster, they beheld the pale and withered features of Wolfgang the huntsman, slowly dropping gore, as it stood on the end of a pike. Hendrick fainted, and lay long in a trance, and when he did recover he retired into the monastery of St. Hubert, where he shortly died.

"Ages have passed away since this event is said to have occurred, and generation after generation has sunk into the tomb, but the tradition survives, and the peasant of the Bergstrasse, when he hears the howls of the wolf, redoubled and prolonged by the echoes of his mountains, starts with horror, and recollects the fate of Wolfgang the hunter; and it is still asserted that, on the anniversary of the fatal night, when he was slain, the boarwolf is seen to run yelling amid the hills, pursued by the demons to whom he so unhappily bound himself."

THE CAVERN OF DEATH.

"How awful is the approach of night amid these dreary shades!" cried the brave Sir Albert, as he traversed the most desolate part of the Black Forest. These were the first words that escaped his lips, since, about mid-day, he had entered that wild desert: and they were heard with satisfaction by Maurice, his Esquire and only attendant, whom respect had for some time with difficulty restrained from breaking the silence, which, terrupted only at intervals by the shrieks of the owl, or the flutter of the bat, seemed to deepen the horrors of that gloomy scene, and impressed on his mind a superstitious dread, which had no visible object, yet rose to the most agonizing height.

"Ah, sir!" cried he, "what courage less intrepid than yours would at this hour of darkness thus rashly penetrate the recesses of this forest?"

"I have seen thee bold in battle, Maurice," said Sir Albert, "what mighty danger dost thou apprehend in this solitude, which thou canst deem it rashness in me to encounter?"

"Such scenes as these," returned the Esquire, "bring every deed of horror to one's thought: in gloom like this, the dæmons of the air, and spirits of the dead, have power."

"My conscience is clear from every deed," said Sir Albert: "which should make me dread the vengeance of departed spirits; and I trust that Heaven and good Angels will defend me from the malice of the Powers of Darkness. For any mortal foes I am armed, and fear not to encounter them."

"Would to heaven I had turned my back," cried Maurice, "before I had reached this dismal place!"

"And how could we have avoided it?" demanded the knight. "Thou hast thyself been my guide towards the Castle of Dornheim."

"I expected you would have reached it ere sunset, sir," returned the Esquire: but you have rode so slowly"—

"It is true," said Sir Albert: "my mind has been too much occupied with the thoughts of her on whose account, as to thee only I have confided, I have travelled hither, to leave me any leisure to recollect the tardy pace of my wearied horse."

He was then beginning to relapse into his former musing; but Maurice, who, in the sound of a human voice, had found some relief from the terrific phantasms which haunted his imagination, was eager to engage him in further discourse; and though already acquainted with the story of his love, yet, since he knew the satisfaction with which on that subject his master would always enlarge, he would not miss the opportunity of introducing it.

"Did you not tell me, sir," said he, that it was three years since last you saw the Lady Constance?"

"It is more," replied Sir Albert. "My heart would persuade me I had been separated from her during countless ages. —Ah! could I but know with what aspect she would review me!"

"It is impossible, sir," said Maurice, that to merit and constancy like yours, she can be insensible."

"While I was at a distance from her," said Sir Albert, "I was pleased at being thus flattered; my own heart flattered me. I knew indeed, that for me she had never acknowledged any affection; but I knew that towards all others she had shown the most marked indifference; and even from the solicitude with which she would often shun me, I could then draw a favorable inference, since, had she not been conscious that I adored her, she could have had no cause to treat me with less courtesy that others; and love so carefully concealed as mine, what but reciprocal love could have discovered? What other motive, have I vainly fancied, could have so frequently suffused her cheek with blushes, if I gazed on her, perhaps too eagerly? What else could have occasioned her emotion when we parted? Had I been indifferent to her, would she not—after so long an acquaintance with me, would she not have bidden me adieu? But the unfinished sentence died upon her lips; and, though she hasted from my presence, I had seen the tear that was starting from her eye."

"I have often wondered, sir," said Maurice, "how, with so strong an attachment to the Lady Constance, you could resolve to quit Prague, where she resided, without declaring to her your sentiments and endeavoring to obtain the avowal of hers."

"I have told thee, Maurice," returned Sir Albert, "that I had rather have died than have engaged her whose happiness I prized above my own, to share the fortunes of a man who had so little prospect of being able to place her in a rank worthy of her merit.—I do not now entertain any such presumptuous views: I wish but to see her: of what further I desire, my own heart is unconscious. Perhaps, since my sword has purchased me some portion of renown; since I have received the honor of Knighthood from the imperial Frederic Barbarossa, and have acquired several noble friends who have promised me their services—perhaps, at some future period, I may find myself in a situation—But I have already said I will not indulge these thoughts. How far distant, Maurice, is the Castle of Hertzwald, where she now resides, from that of the Baron of Dornheim?"

"It is little more than a league," replied the Esquire. "I was frequently there while I dwelt at the Castle of Dornheim. It was then occupied by her uncle; at whose death, a few months since, it devolved to her father."

Another interval of silence now ensued; but Maurice, again solicitous to break it—Did you never, sir, acquaint Lord Frederic with your love?" said he.

"No, never," replied Sir Albert; "for though, from the time when it was my fortune to save his life in battle, he always professed for me the warmest friendship, yet his own insensibility to the softer passions, deterred me from placing in him the same confidence on that subject as I readily should on any other. It was by accident that he mentioned to me the arrival of the father of Constance to settle so near the Castle of Dornheim, whither he had before so frequently invited me. Had he ever experienced a passion like mine, I have often since reflected, that the eager emotion with which I then accepted his invitation might sufficiently have discovered to him the secret of my soul.

"From his childhood," said Maurice, "Lord Frederic was ever of a haughty and violent temper—a stranger to tenderness and pity; and, though I had received from him many favors, and was yet more secure of the protection of the Baron his Father, I account myself fortunate in my removal from——But whence this sudden stream of light upon our paths?"

"Is it not the moon emerging from behind a cloud?" said Sir Albert.

"The moon is already set," returned the Esquire, trembling with renewed fears.

Sir Albert looked up—the thick interwoven branches of the trees in that spot obstructed his view; but, advancing a few paces to a more open place, he perceived a small black cloud, which seemed to hang lower than the rest, and hovered over his head with a tremulous motion, from the broken edges of which darted forth flashes of light sufficiently strong to dissipate the darkness, which by this time completely overspread the earth. Sir Albert gazed on it with wonder, and with that awe which any supernatural appearance necessarily impresses on the mind. The terrified Maurice dropped the reins, and in speechless agony expected some event of horror.—Presently they heard in the air a loud shriek, which seemed uttered by no mortal voice; and at the same moment the clouds burst asunder; and while the darker parts faded away, and mixed with the surrounding air, all the rays of light which had streamed from it, seemed to unite in one large ball of fire, and, descending towards the earth with a rapid course, sunk amid a thick cluster of trees, and still continued to gleam behind their branches. Sir Albert instantly spurred forward his horse, and hastened towards the spot. Maurice, with a trembling voice, urged him to forbear; but regardless of his fears, the Knight advanced, and, forcing a passage through the trees, saw that the meteor still appeared suspended over the entrance of a deep dark Cavern, which was illuminated by its splendor: but ere he could come quite up, it sunk into the abyss, and every object was enveloped in a thicker darkness than before.

Sir Albert, for some moments, hesitated how to act: his mighty courage, which always impelled him to attempt every perilous adventure, strongly urged him to enter the Cavern, and explore the mystery which some inward and inexplicable prepossession concurred with the appearance of the meteor to persuade him he should discover within its recesses; yet the darkness of the night, which seemed to preclude the possibility of such a discovery, and the probability that the cavern might be the abode of savage beasts or venomous serpents, to whose fury should he, in that dismal place, expose himself, he might perish ingloriously, the victim of an unjustifiable temerity, at last determined him to defer the attempt till the morrow, when he purposed to return with lights; and for the present to pursue his journey to the Castle of Dornheim, where he was already apprehensive he should arrive too late for admittance. On returning to Maurice, he found him so overcome with terror, that he seemed scarcely to retain his senses: he talked wildly of a Spirit who pursued him, and of voices issuing from the Cavern. Sir Albert, though seldom moved to anger by any trivial cause, was at last impatient of fears he deemed so groundless, and reproved his folly with a harshness which seemed in some degree to recall him to himself.

They had not proceeded far, before they discovered a light through the trees; Maurice started, and would have turned back; for the meteor still haunted his imagination, and left him no recollection of the vicinity of the Castle of Dornheim, whence Sir Albert concluded the light to proceed, and he soon found that his conjecture was just. On approaching nearer, he perceived that the whole front of the Castle was illuminated; and, amid many voices which he heard within its walls, he could distinguish the strains of mirthful music. Though the soul of Sir Albert was little disposed to share in this apparent festivity, he was pleased to find that the drawbridge was not yet raised, nor the porter retired to rest; which had he found to be the case, it had been his intention rather to take up his lodging for that night in the Forest, than to disturb the family at an unseasonable hour. On sounding a horn which was suspended by the gate, it was instantly unbarred, and a Seneschal came forth, and invited him to enter, telling him, that on that day admittance was free to all. Sir Albert could not but demand what prosperous event was the occasion of the rejoicing which he perceived in the Castle. The Seneschal replied, that it was to celebrate the approaching nuptials of the Baron with a lady whom he had for some time courted, and which, it had been that morning settled, should take place in three days time. The knight then demanded to speak with Lord Frederic; he was conducted into a spacious apartment, where he had not waited long before Lord Frederic came.

Sir Albert, having raised the vizor of his casque, advanced to accost him; but he no sooner recognised the Knight, than, not allowing him time to speak, he embraced him with an eagerness sufficiently expressive of his joy. " Is it possible, my friend!" cried he, " that I behold thee here?" Thy arrival at this juncture was the object of my most ardent wishes; it was an happiness to which my hope durst scarce aspire."

" I consider so kind a welcome, my Lord!" replied Sir Albert, " as an additional proof of your friendship towards me; and it enhances the pleasure this meeting has afforded me."

" Ascribe not my joy to friendship only," replied Lord Frederic: " my own interest has too principal a share in it.—To see thee at any time I should rejoice; but now, when to valor like thine I may owe the felicity of my life, thy fortunate arrival has recalled me from desperation."

" What mean you, my Lord?" said the Knight; " what cause can have reduced you to despair? and in what manner can I be so happy as to serve you?"

" It is not now a season to explain myself more fully, said Lord Frederic: " among the crowds who now enter promiscuously every apartment in the Castle, I know not who may overhear me. To-morrow morning we will walk together in the Forest. Meanwhile I will lead thee to the feast: after thy journey hither, refreshment may be welcome to thee; but, amid the sports and folly of my father's servile train, let the recollection of our mutual amity possess thy mind; and let me find thee tomorrow, as thou hast ever hitherto appeared to me, a friend on whom I may rely."

Lord Frederic there presented his newly arrived friend to his father, who was encircled by a crowd of the guests who were come to partake of his festival. The Baron on hearing his name announced, turned hastily round; but, instead of bidding him welcome, he for some moments regarded him and continued silent.

Sir Albert, who had expected a different reception, was in some degree confused at this; and Lord Frederic, visibly offended at his father's coldness towards a friend to whom he owed so much—" I thought, my Lord," said he, " I had already informed you, that it was this valiant Cavalier who exposed his own life to the most imminent danger, to rescue me from the enemies against whom, wearied, and fainting with loss of blood, I was no longer able to defend myself.

"And I will eagerly embrace every opportunity, my son!" returned the Baron, starting as if from a deep musing, to prove to him and to the world, how dearly I prize that life which he then preserved.—Most valiant sir!" continued he, addressing himself to Sir Albert, "I must entreat your forgiveness, if, at the moment of your approach, my thoughts were so far engrossed by other matters, that I did not, immediately on the mention of your name, recollect the vast obligation I was under to you. It is with unfeigned joy that I embrace the deliverer of my son, and personally express to him the gratitude and esteem which I long have borne him. You are most welcome to my castle; and I flatter myself that you will show, by the length of your abode in it, your persuasion of the satisfaction your presence affords me."

Sir Albert made a suitable reply to this compliment; and, after a few more expressions of courtesy, the Baron entreated him to disarm. The Knight at first refused; but on being further pressed, he complied; and retiring to a private chamber, he was attended by his own Esquire, and by one of the domestics of the castle, who, by the Baron's command, brought him a rich robe to put on, after he should have quitted his arms.

As Maurice was unbuckling his corslet, Sir Albert perceived that his hand trembled—"Thou hast not yet," said he, "recovered from the terror which seized thee in the forest."

The Esquire acknowledged he had not.

"Did you meet with any alarming adventure there, sir?" said the Baron's domestic.

"We passed near the mouth of a Cavern," returned Sir Albert: "what terrific visions Maurice might behold there, himself can best inform you."

"The mouth of a Cavern?" exclaimed the domestic; "and near this castle?"

"Scarce a furlong distant," replied the Knight.

"And did you then see nothing there, sir?" rejoined the other.

"What should you suppose me to have seen?" demanded Sir Albert, with some emotion.

"So many sights of terror have been seen in that spot," returned the domestic, "that it is long since any of us have dared to approach it. That Cavern is assuredly the habitation of the infernal spirits. Sometimes there have been heard in it hollow groans, or shrieks of anguish; sometimes, noises resembling the rushing of torrents, or the rumbling of pent-up vapors. There is a report, that some murder was formerly perpetrated there, and that it is the avenging spirit of the dead who still haunts the place where he was disunited from his body."

"Were these opinions current, Maurice," said Sir Albert, "during the time of thy abode at this castle?"

"I have heard some mention of them, sir," returned the Esquire, paler than before.

"And how long is it since these strange noises and appearances were first noticed in the cavern?" said the Knight.

"I have been told, sir," returned the Baron's domestic, "that the first portentous circumstance observed there, was a light which shone round the mouth of it, some four or five and twenty years ago, nearly about the time when the castle came into the possession of the present lord. But I can aver nothing on the subject with any certainty, as it is scarcely three months since I came hither myself."

"Thou, Maurice, camest hither with the present Baron," said Sir Albert—"Dost not thou remember any further particulars? Did no tradition point out who this murdered person was supposed to have been?"

"Some traveller, wandering in the forest, sir," replied Maurice; "but indeed the murder was only a vague report; and the Cavern had been dreaded equally by the neighboring people, from a period far earlier than that of the accession of the Baron."

"Has this cave any particular name?" demanded the Knight.

"It is called the **Cavern of Death*?" returned the domestic.

Sir Albert made an end of attiring himself in silence; for this account of a place where he had himself witnessed a circumstance which he believed to be supernatural, had made a deep impression on his mind.—His desire to penetrate the innermost recesses of the Cavern was now stronger than ever: he judged it, however, expedient to forbear mentioning the design he had conceived, since he knew not who might have an interest in preventing the dire discoveries to which he was inwardly persuaded it would lead.

As soon as he was ready, he returned to the great Hall, where the Baron and his son received him with new demonstrations of joy. A magnificent banquet was now spread. The Baron placed Sir Albert in the most honorable seat, nearest himself, and treated him as a guest of the highest distinction. Sir Albert, however, could not but observe, that from time to time he fixed his eyes on him with a remarkable intentness, but they were instantly averted if his encountered them. For Lord Frederic, his stern and frowning brow sufficiently expressed the disturbance of his mind; he joined in no discourse with any of the guests; and if ever a momentary smile dispelled the gloom of his countenance, it was when he looked towards his newly arrived friend. As Sir Albert extended his hand across the table the lustre of a ring he wore on his finger caught the Baron's eye. He praised its richness, and requested permission to view it more closely. Sir Albert immediately took it off, and presented it to him. It was a large ruby, encircled with brilliants. The Baron examined it with great attention; and declared the ruby to be the most valuable he had ever seen.

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* Die Hole des Todes, is the name which it still retains; and the neighboring peasantry at this day dread to approach it, and entertain many wild and superstitious ideas respecting it.

"I am myself, Sir Knight," added he, "well skilled in jewels; and you have shown yourself to be equally so, by the purchase of so fine a stone."

"I assure you my lord," returned Sir Albert, "I am totally unqualified to judge of its value: it bears, indeed, an high one to me—not on account of its own richness, but because it is the only relic I retain of my deceased father."

The Baron again praised the beauty of the ring, and returned it to its owner.

The banquet was not ended till a very late hour. At last, when it was almost morning, the guests departed, well satisfied with the hospitality they had experienced; and the Baron himself conducted Sir Albert to the chamber he had caused to be prepared for him, where, after many expressions of courtesy, he left him. In his way thence he met Maurice, who was going to attend upon his master. He immediately knew him, and expressed his satisfaction at his return to the castle.

"I was sorry," added he, "that you should receive any cause for displeasure in the service of my son: but though you chose to quit him, you may remain assured of my friendship and protection."

The Esquire thanked him for this assurance; and the Baron, telling him he would gladly speak further with him, desired him to repair to his apartment in the morning, as early as he should rise.

Maurice then attended his master, who soon dismissed him, and retired to rest; but it was long before sleep closed his eyes. Lord Frederic's mysterious expressions and visible melancholy, rendered him anxious for further discourse with him; but he was yet more impatient to enter the Cavern, of which such strange accounts had been given him.

His imagination seemed already to have exhausted every possible circumstance which might relate to it; yet he continued retracing each idea, till, overcome by weariness and watching, he at last fell into a slumber.

His dreams did not correspond with this latest subject of his meditations: they were dismal, mysterious, and terrific.—He imagined himself again seated at the Baron's festive board; the strains of musick again sounded in his ears; mirth sparkled in the eyes of every guest, and the light of innumerable torches diffused an artificial day: when suddenly their brightness was eclipsed by the interposition of a dark shadow, which skimmed along the table, and sometimes seemed to rest hovering over the centre of it. Sir Albert and all the guests looked up, and beheld a most hideous spectre, of a gigantic size, traversing the air above their heads with a slow and melancholy flight; his stern and threatening aspect appalled every heart. As they regarded him, an hollow voice proclaimed,

> ——"The fated hour is come!
> And the fell powers of vengeance are abroad!"

The castle shook from its foundations: the spectre waved his wings, and immediately a thick mist arose, which in a few moments enveloped all who were present. Sir Albert could no longer distinguish any object; but, amid the general darkness, his ears were thrice assailed with shrieks of horror. On a sudden, a vivid ray of light streamed from the east upon the spot on which he stood; he turned his eyes, and beheld a cloud resembling that which the preceding evening had directed his steps to the *Cavern of Death*; and by degrees he discerned, seated in the midst, a warrior, clad in refulgent arms, and bearing on his breast the ensign of the cross. The radiance which surrounded him dispersed the mist and Sir Albert found, that of all the company who had been assembled at the feast, himself alone remained. The horrible spectre had also disappeared at the approach of this less terrific phantom, who, descending from the cloud, and regarding Sir Albert with a look of celestial benignity, extended his arms to embrace him. Sir Albert with an emotion which he had never before experienced, hastened towards him; but no sooner did the phantom meet his touch, than its substance seemed to fade away; its shining arms dropped off, and the Knight perceived that he had folded a skeleton to his breast.—He started, and unclosed his arms with horror! yet it fell not to the ground; but, waving in the air a bloody sword, which at first it had not weilded, it distinctly uttered, in a thin faint voice these words:

> "From this cold hand thou must receive this sword,
> Ere I can be avenged, or thou restored!"

and immediately vanished.

The horror it had inspired awoke Sir Albert. A dewy chill had invaded his limbs;—for some moments he scarce durst raise his eyes, lest they should meet some shape of terror; and the fear which now possessed his soul, was perhaps the more painful to him, because it was the first time he had ever experienced its power. By degrees, he became sensible that it had no other object than a dream; but though he then soon shook it off, yet still the impression continued which that dream had made on his mind; and he was persuaded that it was some vision of mysterious import, and not any common creation of fancy, which had thus deeply moved him.

The words of the apparition, who had so suddenly assumed a form so ghastly, still resounded in his ears; and he felt a strong conviction that some event of futurity would unfold to him their oracular meaning. He was unable to guess who the person should be whose spirit thus seemed to call for vengeance; yet he was sometimes inclined to suppose it might be the same whom popular report averred to have been murdered in the *Cavern of Death.*

His thoughts were still wholly occupied by conjectures on this subject, when a message was brought to him from the Baron, inviting him to breakfast with him in his apartment. He complied, and found the Baron alone, and was received by him with the warmest expressions which courtesy could dictate. The compliments he paid to his character, and former heroic actions, were indeed such as gave pain rather than pleasure to Sir Albert, whose modesty was such as rendered all praises of himself extremely irksome to him. He therefore availed himself of the earliest opportunity to turn the discourse on other subjects, and readily answered such questions as the Baron put to him, relative to the countries he had visited in his travels. He asked him, at last, of what place he was a native?

"I was born in the city of Prague, my lord," returned the Knight.

"Was your father, then a Bohemian?" demanded the Baron

"It may seem strange, my lord," replied Sir Albert, "to say, that I know not with any certainty what was my father's country: my mother, Isabella Von Glatzdorff, was of one of the most ancient families in Bohemia; but I lost both my parents too early to retain any recollection of them. I am only acquainted with their misfortunes, and my own share in them, from the report of an uncle, to whom I owed my education."

"Your words excite my curiosity," said the Baron: "may I inquire what those misfortunes were, in which you were so early involved?"

"I can relate the story but imperfectly, my lord," returned the Knight. My uncle, in his youth, assumed the cross, and engaged in the service of Baldwin the second of Jerusalem, at that time much straitened by his enemies; and in the battle in which that Prince was unfortunately taken prisoner by the Turkish Emir Balac, he was generally reported to have been slain; but fate had reserved him for severer sufferings: he also had fallen alive into the power of the infidels, among whom he remained in a rigorous captivity during eleven years. At last he contrived means to escape; but on his return to Prague, when he expected to have been received with joy by his family, he experienced the most cruel disappointment. His parents, and his elder brother, were dead: the latter, believing him no more, had bequeathed all his estates to a distant relation, omitting to make any reservation in his favor, in the event of his return. His sister alone survived; but it was many days before he could discover the miserable place of her abode; and, when his search was at last successful, what were the feelings of his generous heart, when he found her bereft of reason, and supported by the charity of strangers? from them he learned, that after the death of her parents, she had disobliged the brother on whom she was left dependent, by her marriage with Rodolph Von Fahrenbach, a young stranger, of whom they could give no further account than that he had distinguished his valor in a contest with a Bohemian nobleman, who also courted her favor; and that shortly after their marriage, he had quitted her, to engage in a crusade, in compliance with a vow he had made previous to his acquaintance with her: that he had been absent two years: at the end of which time certain intelligence of his death was brought to her, the shock proved greater than she was able to support; it threw her into a delirious fever, from which, for many days, the utmost danger was apprehended; her life was however preserved, but her senses never returned to her. She had been for some months in this deplorable situation, when she was visited by her brother, who immediately took her and me (who had not been born till after my father's departure) to his own house, when he employed every means for her recovery which the advice of the ablest physicians could suggest; but his cares were unavailing; the deep melancholy which continually preyed upon her mind, soon threw her into a decline; and within a year after his return, she died, the unhappy victim of despair. From that time, all the affection which my uncle had borne her, seemed transferred to me. He made many inquiries after my father's family, wishing to obtain their protection for me; but he could not discover in what part of Germany they were settled. My mother, in a moment of frenzy, had destroyed all the letters she had received from my father, and indeed every memorial of him, except this ring, which you, my lord, last night observed: it had been his first gift to her; and, till the latest moment of her life, she would never suffer it to be taken from her finger. But, if my uncle failed in discovering my other relations, he never permitted me to feel their loss. His income was small; but he abridged his own expenses, that he might be enabled to defray those of my education; and, as soon as I was at an age to bear arms, he led me himself into the paths of glory. Unacquainted with my real father, I always venerated this generous kinsman as such. He has now been dead some years.

The Baron heard this narrative with much attention; and the various changes of his countenance expressed how deeply he interested himself in the misfortunes of the unhappy Isabella. Sir Albert observed his concern, and felt himself under an obligation to him for it. They continued in discourse for some time longer; when the Knight, recollecting the desire Lord Frederic had expressed to see him, thought it time to go in quest of him: he rose, and bade the Baron adieu for the present; and with mutual courtesy they parted.

In a long gallery which he passed through in his way from the Baron's apartment, he found Lord Frederic, walking to and fro with hasty steps.

"What interesting discourses can have detained you so long with my father?" said that impetuous youth: "I have been here almost an hour, waiting till you should quit him."

"I staid longer with him," replied Sir Albert, "because I expected you would meet me in his apartment: as you came not thither, I concluded you were otherwise engaged. I was now about to seek you; but I did not imagine I should find you here awaiting me."

"I could not just now appear before my father," said Lord Frederic; my mind is too much agitated to allow me to dissemble. But this is not a place for private conference; let us go where we may discourse without danger of being overheard."—And, as he spoke, he took the arm of Sir Albert, and led him out of the gallery.

They passed onwards to the castle gate: Lord Frederic threw it open, and went forth into the forest.—Sir Albert still accompanied him; and neither broke silence till they reached a deep glade, entirely excluded from all view of the castle. Here they stopped—Lord Frederic quitted Sir Albert's arm, and regarding him earnestly, "I would know," said he, "whether I might indeed accost thee by the title of my friend?"

"Can you think so meanly of me, my lord," returned the Knight, "as to suppose I should ever afford him for whom I had professed a regard, any cause to question its sincerity? I shall certainly never be unmindful of the many courtesies I have received from you; and I trust I may appeal to more than words, to prove the reality of the friendship I have borne you."

"It is true, dear Albert!" cried Lord Frederic; "I have not forgotten that to thy friendship I have owed my life, while mine towards thee has hitherto had no opportunities of showing itself but in words and vain professions: hereafter, I trust, I may be able to give thee more solid proofs of gratitude. But first, I must again have recourse to the valor to which I am already so much indebted, for a service, which, if it refuse to render me, it were better it had never been exerted in my cause—Life is only a blessing to the happy!"

"And what unexpected calamity, my lord," said Sir Albert, "can have rendered you otherwise? Your perturbed looks, and many expressions which have fallen from you, lead me to apprehend some dreadful evil."

"But for thee," said Lord Frederic, "and I must endure the greatest; I must behold the mistress whom I love to distraction, in another's arms."

"And have you then felt the power of love, my lord?" cried the Knight;—but who is your fair mistress? and how can I preserve her to you?"

"Before I disclose further, Sir Albert," said the youth, "you must solemnly promise me that you will assist my views."

"It were unnecessary to bind myself by any promise," returned he, "since, without that additional tie, I shall undoubtedly act on this, and on every future occasion, as friendship and the laws of honor shall require of me."

Lord Frederic pressed him further; but Sir Albert liked it not. His intimacy with that young nobleman had arisen, not from any similarity of sentiment or of temper, but solely from their having been companions in war; and it had assumed the name of friendship, since Lord Frederic, preserved by Sir Albert from the most imminent danger, and therefore considering him as the bravest of men, had eagerly courted his society, and had, on every occasion, professed for him the highest regard.

When Lord Frederic found that he persisted in his refusal to engage himself by the promises he required, he at last ceased to insist on it, and, telling him that he would evince to him how great a dependence he placed on his friendship, he proceeded to relate the circumstances which had induced him to demand his aid.

"Thou mayst remember," said he that I was sent for by my father from the camp, in a manner which led me to conclude that he had some motive of importance for requiring my return.—I came hither by hasty journeys; and, on my arrival, was informed of his intended marriage, which I found he was desirous of communicating to me in person, lest, hearing of it from others, I might be induced to suppose my own interests endangered, and to attempt some opposition to his designs. I was the less surprised at this intelligence, because I knew, that, since the death of his other sons, it had been a constant subject of uneasiness to him to behold in me the last of his race: I have heard that he suffered himself to be alarmed by some prophecy or dream, I know not particularly what, which had denounced some dreadful fate to his family, whenever one male should be the only survivor of it. He never clearly explained himself to me on this point; but he had often pressed my marriage with a degree of earnestness which was very irksome to me, and had always appeared displeased at the invincible reluctance I had discovered. When, therefore, he acquainted me with his wish to present me to the lady to whom he expected me to pay the duties of a son, I attended him to her abode, not without some satisfaction that he had rather chosen to offer her his own hand, than to attempt to compel me to give her mine. But how can I express to you, Sir Albert! the sudden change which the sight of this peerless beauty effected in my heart? That heart hitherto so insensible, in a moment confessed the power of her irresistible charms. I had been too little interested in her to make any previous inquiries respecting her; I had not been even told she was fair:—judge, therefore—if ever your temper, softer than my own, has felt the influence of beauty—judge what were my emotions, when in her to whom I was introduced as to my future step-mother, I beheld the most lovely creature that the world certainly ever saw! With the idea of my father's wife, I had connected that of proportionable age; but her's appeared not to exceed my own. Her form—her eyes—I cannot describe them, Sir Albert!—If my hopes in you deceive me not, I trust you will ere long behold her; and believe me, I do not mean to underrate your services, when I tell you that the sight of such charms were alone a recompense worthy of them. The only embellishment of which her beauty was capable, it received when I was presented to her; she was desired to consider me as the son of him to whom her hand was destined; she sighed as she regarded me; and her cheek, before almost colorless, was suffused with a blush, as she permitted me to take her hand, which, with an eagerness which banished from my remembrance every idea of the character in which the salute was permitted me, I pressed to my enraptured lips. She sighed more deeply than before, and drew her hand suddenly from me; her eyes filled with tears, and she turned away.—I do not surely flatter myself, Sir Albert, when I impute these marks of sorrow to the impulse of sentiments with which my appearance had inspired her: she regretted that it was to my father, and not to myself, that she was promised; and it was her apprehension lest this emotion should be remarked by those in whose eyes it would be deemed a crime, which made her so hastily quit a situation in which, if I may judge from my own feelings, she would have found it so difficult to dissemble hers. It was probably fortunate for me that her discretion, or perhaps her timidity, exceeded mine: I should questionless have otherwise betrayed to her father and my own the new-born passion, which, as soon as I had recovered from that kind of trance into which the first view of her charms had thrown me, every motive so strongly urged me to conceal. Yet I think some infatuation, rather than my dissimulation, must have so far blinded their eyes as to prevent their discovering it—I have reason to be persuaded it has entirely escaped their observation.

To attain the possession of this incomparable fair, I would joyfully resign any riches, any honors; but the thought of beholding her in the arms of another, of seeing her sacrificed to one whose age and gray hairs ought to have forbidden him to aspire to the possession of so lovely a maid—Sir Albert! it drives me to distraction! madness will seize my brain, if thou deny me thy compassion.—Dost thou hesitate? Canst thou refuse to succor me?"

"I most sincerely compassionate you, my lord!" returned the Knight; "and I must grieve that you have resigned your soul to a passion which involves you in so many difficulties."

"It involves me in no difficulties," cried Lord Frederic eagerly, "from which thou canst not extricate me."

"Is it in any plan for carrying off this lady," said Sir Albert, "that you require my assistance? Let me entreat you my lord, to consider coolly the peculiar circumstances in which—"

"I have considered," interrupted lord Frederic; "and I know that there is but one possible means by which, without ruining my fortune, I can attain the secure possession of my love. —It is to the Baron of Dornheim that her hand is promised by her ambitious parent.—Could it be possible for me to elude his vigilance, and to steal her from his castle, I might be well assured that the estates of my incensed father never would be mine; but were that title, were those estates now mine—Sir Albert! canst thou term thyself my friend, and not recollect that thy hand might render them such?"

Sir Albert started! he regarded lord Frederic with a look of surprise and apprehension, and read on his gloomy brow the confirmation of the fears his words had suggested.

"I would myself be baron of Dornheim," said Lord Frederic," after a pause; "dost thou not understand me?"

"I dare not imagine I do," replied the Knight, turning from him with horror.

"Hadst thou ever loved, Sir Albert!" resumed Lord Frederic, "thou wouldst have felt, that to know in any man a rival, suffices to obliterate from the mind every former sentiment with which he may have been regarded.—I see thou hast understood me; that thou knowest I wish my rival removed, and that thou art shocked at the idea of the relationship he bears me: but he is not thy father!—I mean not to lift my own arm against him; but thou—thou, who art my friend, and who art bound to him by no tie of kindred or of duty—when thou considerest that the whole future happiness of my life depends on this short anticipation of the fate which his years announce cannot be far distant—"

"What have you ever observed in my character, my lord," said Sir Albert, looking sternly round, "which can authorise you to offer me this insult? Am I an assassin?"

"Do not suppose me capable of insulting you, my friend! returned Lord Frederic; "I know your high sense of honor; and trust me, I would employ your valor in no enterprize unworthy of it. Could the Baron be surprised at any disadvantage, I should never have had recourse to your arm; among my own followers, I could have found those who would faithfully have executed my purpose. But that were impossible—he never, even for a moment, is alone. I know not what is his motive; I have not heard that he has any enemy of whose designs he is apprehensive; yet his conduct is such as might induce such a supposition. Throughout the day, some of his attendants are always with him; and at night, a priest and two domestics constantly sleep in his chamber. This circumstance, as you will perceive, must render vain every hope of surprising him; and, if he has leisure to defend himself, your prowess only were a match for his. In his youth, you may have heard he was a warrior of the first renown; nor has age yet unnerved his arm. I know you would scorn to contend with an enemy of inferior might; but be assured, my friend—"

"Call me no longer such!" cried Sir Albert; "I disclaim the friendship of a parricide!"

Lord Frederic was provoked at the reproach; but, having already so far put himself in Sir Albert's power, he durst not express his indignation, but rather sought, by new entreaties, to bend him to his purpose. "Were my love less ardent," said he, "my schemes would be less desperate; but who, under the dominion of so irresistible a passion, could forbear the only means of attaining that felicity, which otherwise, within three short days, must be forever placed beyond his reach? If I loved a meaner beauty, it might perhaps be possible I should resign her; but who that adored the Lady Constance—"

"Constance!" exclaimed Sir Albert, starting wildly: "Is it Constance?"

"Constance of Hertzwald, is the lady destined to my father's arms," returned Lord Frederic, "if thou refuse, in pity to her and to thy friend, to rescue her youthful charms from such a sacrifice, and to give her to a lover more worthy to enjoy them!"

"And does the Lady Constance return thy love?" said Sir Albert, trembling, and scarcely able to pronounce the question.

"I cannot doubt it," replied Lord Frederic: "I have never indeed received from her lips the transporting assurance, since I have never been able to obtain an interview with her but in my father's presence; but one of her women, who is my only confidant, assures me that she is very averse to the marriage proposed, and that many circumstances have rendered it very evident that she secretly loves another. That I was the man so blest, I durst not positively assure myself till the last time I visited her father's castle; but then, her looks, her whole demeanor, where such as it were impossible to misinterpret. She seemed unable to avert her eyes from my person; yet if I, or any other, appeared to notice the earnestness with which she regarded me, she was covered with confusion; and many times a sigh escaped her, which still more strongly spoke the tender sentiments which occupied her soul."

While Lord Frederic was thus speaking, the countenance of Sir Albert was flushed with a thousand conflicting passions. Twice he laid his hand upon his sword; and twice, even amid the transports of jealous fury, he recollected that he was the guest of him on whom he would have drawn it; that he was himself armed, and that his rival was not—he recollected, and he was master of the emotion.

"We may meet again, Lord Frederic!" cried he—"if we do, remember that we meet no more as friends!" And, as he spoke, he turned from him, and walked with hasty strides towards the thickest shades of the forest.

Lord Frederic, astonished at his demeanor, for which, ignorant that he had ever seen the Lady Constance, he could assign no adequate cause, stood for a moment surprised. He would then have called him back; but Sir Albert only quickened his pace.—Fired with rage, he would then have followed him, to demand an explanation of his words, and still more of the menacing air with which they had been uttered; but he was now lost among the trees, and Lord Frederic sought him in vain.

Sir Albert, meantime, careless whither he went, walked on. When he had reached a part of the forest considerably distant from the spot where he had left Lord Frederic, he threw himself heavily on the grass, and adandoned his soul to the desponding thoughts which the discourse he had heard suggested to him.

"Lord Frederic is then beloved by Constance!" said he to himself: "the modest maid, whose eyes were cast down if mine too fondly gazed upon her, has looked on him with tenderness! False changeful Constance! yet why do I accuse her? what right had I to her affection? what encouragement did she ever afford to my hopes? To the love which I never avowed to her, what return could I expect?

Sir Albert continued to dwell on this idea with infinite anguish, and would gladly have given years of his future life to recall but a few of the moments which he had formerly passed in the presence of Constance, when certain of her indifference to every other, his heart had secretly flattered him she was not without some prepossession, in his favor, and had not his generosity forbidden him every attempt to improve that prepossession, he might possibly have gained the love, of which one whose black and murderous designs rendered him so unworthy of her, now boasted that he was the object. By degrees, as Sir Albert repeated to himself Lord Frederic's words, a faint hope arose in his breast, that the confidence with which that fierce youth had spoken of the favor of Constance, might have little other foundation than his own vanity; but the satisfaction which this idea afforded him, was almost instantly lost in the recollection, that, whatever might be the state of her affections, the Baron of Dornheim was within three days to receive her hand. He started from the ground, and stood for some moments almost bereft of thought and reason. A wish presently rushed upon his mind, to see her once more ere that fatal event forever tore her from his hopes.

Animated by this design, he walked on; but he knew not which path would lead him to the castle of Hertzwald, and in that wild forest he had little chance of meeting with any one from whom he could obtain directions. He was provoked, to think that he might possibly have taken a road which would lead him a contrary way from that which he intended; yet he still walked on. At last he descried some turrets through the trees: but much was he disappointed, when, on a nearer approach, he knew them for those of Dornheim. He turned away with horror from the abode of his rivals, and struck into another path; in which fortunately he had not proceeded far, when he perceived a peasant before him. He hastened to overtake him, and inquired the road to the castle of Hertzwald. The man was himself going part of the way thither, and offered to be his guide. As they walked together, the peasant asked Sir Albert many questions; but his answers were short, and often foreign to the purpose: yet when his conductor demanded of him where he meant to lodge that night, it suddenly occurred to him, that in the event of his not being so fortunate that day as to obtain an interview with the Lady Constance, it would be his wish to remain in the forest till the next; and he asked the peasant whether he dwelt near, and would afford him a lodging in his cottage? The peasant replied, that he dwelt not far from the spot where they first had met; and readily agreed to give him such accommodation as he was able. They soon came within sight of the castle of Hertzwald: Sir Albert parted from his guide, and proceeded towards it.

He knew but little of the father of the Lady Constance, who during the time of his former acquaintance with her, had been absent on a journey, and her mother, with whom she had then resided at Prague, was since dead. He was hesitating what motive he should assign for his visit, when he observed a domestic at the gate: of him he asked some questions, and learned from his answers, that the Baron of Dornheim was at that time at the castle, and was to dine there. This intelligence was sufficient to deter Sir Albert from seeking admittance till after his departure; for he felt that it would be impossible for him to command his emotions in the presence of his rival. He therefore quitted the gate, and determined to wait in the vicinity of the castle till the evening. He began to walk to and fro, often looking wistfully up at the windows, wishing he could know which were those of the apartment of Constance.

At last, the reflection that he might be observed by the domestics, and incur suspicion, induced him to quit the front of the castle, and turn into a path which wound behind it. The castle of Hertzwald was much inferior in size and strength to that of Dornheim: pleasure, rather than defence appeared to have been the object of its founder. A magnificent garden lay behind it, fenced from the forest by a high wall, surrounded with battlements. Sir Albert walked on under this wall, with no other view than to pass away the time till the departure of his rival, whose happiness mean while, in enjoying the presence of the Lady Constance, distracted his soul with jealous pangs.—At an angle of the wall was erected a square turret, of which the windows looked out upon the forest. Sir Albert was passing by it, when a voice caught his ear. He looked up; and a window being open, he could distinguish two female figures in the chamber within; but their faces were not turned towards him. With an involuntary curiosity he approached nearer; and could then hear, that she who spoke was endeavoring to comfort the other, who was weeping violently, and with many of the arguments so unavailing to those whose affliction is real, was urging her to restrain her tears.

"Suffer me to weep!" returned at last a gentle voice—it was the voice of Constance; and the heart of Sir Albert instantly acknowledged the sound.

"You have never yet, madam," rejoined the other, "so totally resigned yourself to grief as you do this day."

"This is perhaps the last time," replied Constance, "when I may be permitted to indulge my sorrows. Hitherto, indeed, they have been mitigated by a faint hope that I might be able to move my father's heart, and to obtain at least a little longer respite from this dreaded marriage; but now that hope is lost!"

"But, if this marriage be indeed so hateful to you, madam," said the other, "why will you submit to it?"

"Alas! Elinor," cried Constance, "how canst thou ask me such an idle question? Have I not already done all that maiden modesty would permit me, to avoid it? Have I left any means untried to gain my father from his purpose? Have not my unwearied supplications repeatedly awakened his fiercest anger, and provoked him to treat me with a harshness, which, but a few months since, I could not have supposed I should have survived? Thou knowest how little he regards my tears; and if to-day I have obtained this small indulgence to withdraw myself from the Baron's presence, I have owed it rather to the fear lest he should too plainly perceive, by my demeanor, my reluctance to the marriage, than to any pity for my sufferings: but the Baron does know my reluctance to the marriage. I one day collected sufficient boldness to avow it to him, in the hope, that, if his soul were capable of any generous feelings, he would of his own accord reject the hand of a maiden whose heart was averse to him; but I soon found that I have judged too highly of him; and that the only effect of my avowal was, that he pressed the marriage with greater eagerness than before, lest delay should afford me time to devise some means of escaping it."

" And I still think, madam," said, Elinor, "that those means might be found. You are not watched—why should you not fly from the castle?"

" And whither should I fly?" returned Constance. " Were any place of refuge open to me, thou mayest assure thyself I should be watched. What friend have I, in whose protection I could trust? In what convent should I find a secure asylum, should the Baron of Dornheim require me to be given up?—Thou knowest how far his power extends.—And what dangers more dreaded than death might I not apprehend, should I, an helpless maiden, encounter singly the terrors of this wild forest?"

" I must entreat you, madam," said Elinor, " to forgive me for what I am about to say: the interest I feel in your concerns could alone urge me to a question, which I trust you will be too well assured of my attachment, to ascribe to impertinence or curiosity. The Baron of Dornheim is not indeed a man who could ever have been very likely to gain your love; but yet, pardon me if I imagine, that, so submissive as you have ever hitherto been to the will of your father, you would not, in this only instance, have expressed so much reluctance to obey him, had not your aversion to the alliance proposed, originated in some stronger motive than any personal dislike to your suitor. May I then avow to you the suspicion which I have long entertained, that, had your affections not been otherwise engaged, the Baron of Dornheim would more easily have obtained your hand? And may I presume to solicit you to repose in me a confidence, of which you might be assured my fidelity were worthy, which would certainly greatly ease your mind, and might possibly enable me to render you some service?"—

Elinor paused—and the lady Constance did not immediately return an answer.—At last," If I had hitherto confined such a secret within my breast," said she, were this a moment to declare it?"

" This were the only moment," returned Elinor; "another may not be allowed you!"

"Thou sayest true!" said Constance, bursting afresh into tears: "after to-morrow—Heavens! what a thought!—after to-morrow, it will be criminal to recollect that ever I have seen him?"—

"I have then judged rightly," cried Elinor; "but, madam, since you have avowed thus far, may I not ask further, to whom is it that your affections are so deeply engaged?"

"And what would it avail to tell thee?" returned Constance;—"I cannot! my lips dare not pronounce his name."

"Will you permit me to name him, madam?" said the damsel.

"Thou canst not," cried Constance.

"And yet I have at times fancied I had discovered him," rejoined Elinor.

"Heavens! exclaimed Constance," and how have I then betrayed myself? What unguarded expression has ever escaped me?"

"Your lips, madam," returned the damsel, "have indeed never betrayed you;. but of the language of your eyes you have been less conscious—when last Lord Frederic was here, you looked at him with an earnestness"—

"Is it possible I should have been observed?" cried Constance: "O! Elinor, durst I have spoken to Lord Frederic! Could I but have asked him one question!—I had once almost collected sufficient courage; but I met my father's eye, and I dreaded lest I should inspire him with any suspicion. Methought, could I have spoken with Lord Frederic apart"—

Sir Albert listened, and the paleness of despair overspread his cheek.

"It would not be difficult to find an opportunity of speaking with Lord Frederic," said Elinor;—"many such"—

"Will occur in the castle of Dornheim," said Constance impatiently; but it will be then too late.—I cannot, it is true, give my heart to the Baron; but never, when my hand shall be his, will I indulge it in any voluntary recollection of another—yet, could I but know he lived!"

"Who lived, madam?" cried Elinor; of whom are you speaking?

"Didst thou observe the casque Lord Frederic wore that day?" said Constance.

"Of which the crest was a dragon with expanded wings?" demanded Elinor.

"I would I could know," said Constance, "how that casque came into his possession?"

"And in what manner could that interest you?" rejoined the damsel.

Sir Albert listened more eagerly than before.

"If I mistake not greatly," returned the Lady Constance "that casque had once another owner."

"To whom then did it belong, madam?" said Elinor.

"To one whom thou hast never seen," replied Constance, —"to one whom I shall never see again!"

"Was he then the lover who gained your affections?" demanded the damsel.

"He loved me once," said Constance, "but he knew not with what sentiments I regarded him. I was persuaded that my father would never consent to our union; and I purposely slighted him, in the hope of eradicating from his breast a passion which could only render him miserable. It is now some years since I have seen him: and by this time he has questionless forgotten me; yet I have not forgotten him!"

"And how can you imagine it possible he can have forgotten you?" replied the enraptured Albert, presenting himself before the window—"Ah! loveliest Constance! how little are you acquainted with the power of your own charms, if you suppose that the heart which once confessed it, could ever know a second love!

At the sound of his well-known voice, Constance flew to the window; but when she beheld him, she trembled, and had nearly fainted; and, when she would have spoken to him, his name was all that she was able to pronounce.

"My adored Constance!" exclaimed he, "How infinitely am I repaid at this moment for all the sufferings of my tedious absence!—though banished from your presence I have been insensible to every pleasure; though equally unconscious and undeserving of your love, every anxious fear, every jealous doubt has distracted my soul!"

"But whence—" cried she, with a hastening and interrupted voice—"how came you—? in this remote forest I had not expected—I thought you far distant:—what chance has brought you hither?"

"My impatience to review you," returned he, "was the sole motive of my journey. I could no longer support the anguish of my separation from you."—

"Heavens!" exclaimed she, "and have you then heard what I have carelessly spoken?"

"Can you forgive me, dearest Constance?" said Sir Albert: "I expected to have heard you avow your preference of my rival; the apprehension was too painful to be borne; and I could not resolve to tear myself from the spot where your voice first caught my ear, till the dreadful certainty should free me from the torture of suspense."

"If you have occasioned me any displeasure," returned she, 'it has been by the suspicion which impelled you to listen."

Overcome with joy at this unexpected meeting, Sir Albert spoke freely of the love which, for so many years, he had buried in unbroken silence; and the Lady Constance, forgetful of the reserve which had formerly induced her to reject even his most distant courtesies, acknowledged the affection with which he had long since inspired her heart. She was, however, the first who awoke from this dream of transport; she recollected her situation, and burst into tears.—He eagerly demanded their cause.

"Alas!" cried she, "we have only met, that we may the more severely feel the pain of our eternal saparation!"

"Never!" exclaimed he; "never, my Constance! shalt thou be torn from me!"

"But how," said she "can I escape the dreadful fate to which they destine me?"

"Fly from their power?" returned Sir Albert: "this arm shall shield you from pursuit!—It is not my own interest," pursued he, "which could ever have induced me to urge you to such a step. I know the delicacy of your mind; and I know how unavailing the splendor of the situation to which the Baron of Dornheim could raise you, would be to constitute your felicity.—I can offer you no riches; nor would I, even at this moment, my adored Constance, ask your hand, could I any otherwise than by receiving it, be entitled to the character of your protector."

The Lady Constance listened, and her heart acknowledged the generosity of those sentiments, of which the former conduct of Sir Albert had left her no room to doubt the sincerity: yet she hesitated to comply. Never had she hitherto disobeyed her father; unless it had been by the involuntary affection she entertained for him whose merits deserved her tenderest love, but whose situation, she well knew, would preclude him from any chance of his favor. And now to fly the marriage enforced by his commands, and to give her hand in opposition to his will;—she was alarmed at the idea, and her strict sense of duty forbade her to consent. But Elinor, who had hitherto taken no part in the discourse, now interposed, and in the strongest terms, supported the proposal of Sir Albert. She urged every excuse which the peculiar situation of the lady Constance offered for her compliance; reminded her in how short a time her escape from the Baron would be impossible; and placed before her in the most odious colors, every circumstance of the projected marriage, which she knew inspired her with the greatest dread.

Against these arguments, against the persuasions of Sir Albert, and the pleadings of her own heart in his favor, the Lady Constance was unable to defend herself;—she yielded to their force, and consented to entrust herself to the protection of her lover. Transported at her compliance, he would have had her instantly throw herself from the window where she stood, which was not so high but that she might have done it without danger; for he was anxious to avail himself of the present moment, as well because he feared lest she should recede from her intentions, as because many circumstances might intervene to render her escape, at any future time, less easy. But Elinor earnestly dissuaded her from this: she said that many of the Baron's attendants were wandering in the forest, awaiting the time of his departure; and she was urging many other difficulties, when Sir Albert himself recollected a circumstance which obliged him to give up the idea; he had left his horses at the castle of Dornheim; and it was impossible for Constance to proceed so far on foot as to the nearest town where others might be procured. He therefore concurred in the arrangement proposed by Elinor, who offered, when all the family should be retired to rest, to admit him into the garden, towards which looked the chamber of the Lady Constance, who, on seeing him, should let herself down from the window, and should be conveyed by him to his horse. Elinor entreated that she might be the companion of her flight; to which she, with much satisfaction, agreed. It afterwards, however, occurred to the damsel that it would be better if Sir Albert had the key of the garden, and were to admit himself; since then she need not quit her mistress at the moment when her presence might be of so much avail to support her spirits, and confirm her resolution; she could not at that time go in quest of it, because it lay in the room in which the Baron of Dornheim was entertained; but, as soon as he should quit the castle, she said she could easily possess herself of it; and she requested Sir Albert to tell her where he might be found by her, when she should bring it to him. He described the situation of the cottage of the peasant who had offered him a lodging: and there she promised he should see her soon after sunset.

After a little further discourse between him and the Lady Constance, which they terminated by the interchange of the most solemn promises of affection and fidelity, the necessity of his hastening to recover his horses, or to procure others in their stead, obliged him to tear himself from her. Ere he departed, she drew a white plume from her hair, and threw it to him from the window.

"Wear this in your casque," said she: "I shall distinguish it by the light of the moon; and I shall fly without apprehension of mistake, to the only protector in whom I would confide?"

Sir Albert kissed the plume, and placed it in his casque. "May I ever give you cause to continue that confidence in me, my beloved Constance!" cried he:—"And be assured that I shall value this pledge of your affection more highly than my life. Good Angels guard you till we meet again!—till we meet!—transporting thought!—to part no more!"

Even that idea did not enable Sir Albert to quit the window without pain; but Elinor repeatedly reminding him of the importance of the expedition, he at last complied with her instances, and bade the Lady Constance a final adieu.

It had been his intention to repair to the cottage of the peasant, and to procure some messenger whom he might thence despatch to the castle of Dornheim (whither he had resolved he never would himself return,) to order his Esquire to hasten to him immediately with his horses. He deemed it unnecessary to make any excuse to the Baron for his abrupt departure, since Lord Frederic, whose more immediate guest he had been, might well suppose that it was in consequence of their conference in the forest; and he left it to him to place it in what light he should choose, to his father. His purpose, however, was anticipated; for he was not yet out of sight of the castle of Hertzwald when Maurice met him. The Esquire expressed great joy to review his master; and recounted to him, that on his not returning with Lord Frederic, he had been much troubled; and after waiting some time without being able to procure any intelligence of him, he had at last concluded he must be gone to visit the Lady Constance, whom he well knew his impatience to review; and that he had therefore taken that road in quest of him. Sir Albert commended his diligence, and imparted to him the happy result of the conference he had had with her, and her promise to fly with him that night from her father's castle: he added, that it was his intention to carry her to Vienna; and, as soon as the rites of the church should have rendered her indissolubly his, to demand the protection of the Emperor, whose former marks of favor left him no doubt of obtaining it, against any exertions which might be made by the Baron of Dornheim to force her from him; and he flattered himself that the intercession of so powerful a mediator might dispose her father to an earlier reconciliation than could otherwise be reasonably expected.

While he was speaking he heard the trampling of horses; and he retired behind some trees to avoid them. It was the Baron and his troop, returning to the castle of Dornheim.—Sir Albert felt a degree of satisfaction, that he had quitted that of Hertzwald without having had time to see the Lady Constance. After they had passed, he walked on with Maurice; and inquired of him for his horses, the Esquire replied, that he had left them at the castle of Dornheim, not knowing his intention to return thither no more. Sir Albert ordered him to go immediately and bring them to him at the peasant's cottage; whither he hastened himself, imagining that, since the Baron was already departed, Elinor would speedily visit him with the key which was to admit him into the garden of Hertzwald.

His generous temper never open to mistrust, induced him to place a full confidence in the interest she had expressed in her mistress's concerns. The assertion of Lord Frederic, that one of the damsels of the Lady Constance was in his pay, had not, in those moments of joy, recurred to his memory; nor, though it had, would Sir Albert ever have suspected that damsel to be Elinor. Yet Elinor had for some time been won by the gifts of Lord Frederic, to convey to him private intelligence of every confidence her mistress reposed in her. She had hitherto flattered him with the persuasion, that the Lady Constance slighted his father on account of the preference she felt for himself; and it was with a view of leading her to an avowal of this that she had begun the conference, which contrary to her hopes, had drawn from her the confession of her love for Sir Albert. Disappointed by this, and still more by his sudden appearance, Elinor had only listened to the discourse which ensued between them, with a view of betraying their mutual interests to Lord Frederic; and, having formed a scheme which she was persuaded would be very acceptable to him, she possessed herself of the key, and set out, not for the cottage where Sir Albert awaited her, but for the castle of Dornheim. She was closely veiled, lest any of the domestics of the Baron should know that she belonged to the Lady Constance; and, as it had been her custom in former visits she had made there, she inquired for one whom she knew to be particularly attached to Lord Frederic, by whom she was immediately and privately conducted to his chamber.

On his return from following Sir Albert, he had found that his father was gone to the castle of Hertzwald, whither himself had received no invitation; and he had passed the day alone, freely indulging the wild distraction of his mind, and forming new schemes of violence.—At the entrance of Elinor, his countenance was brightened by a gleam of hope; and he eagerly asked her what news she brought him?

"Such, my lord," returned she, "as I trust when you shall have heard it all, you will deem deserving of some thanks: but the first circumstance I must impart to you, will be little welcome—you have a rival, hitherto unthought of."

"Who?—what rival?" exclaimed he.

"Let me first, my lord," said the damsel, "request you to tell me whence you obtained the casque you wore when last you visited our castle?"

"I had it from a Knight in the imperial service," replied Lord Frederic: "he lent it to me once, when I was sent upon a sudden expedition: I liked it—was lighter than my own;—and I gave him another in exchange for it.—but what of that casque?"

"Was that Knight named Albert, my lord?" demanded Elinor.

"He was," returned Lord Frederic.

"Then know in him," said she, "the favored lover of the Lady Constance."

Lord Frederic started from his seat in fury; he recollected the manner in which his conference with Sir Albert had terminated in the morning, and he wondered he had not before discovered what he was now so incensed to learn. His rage vented itself in many horrid imprecations; and scarcely could Elinor restrain him from going instantly in quest of the rival, on whom he thirsted to avenge himself.

"Were you more calm, my lord," said she, "I could direct you to a surer vengeance than your sword could give you."

"What vengeance," cried Lord Frederic: "tell me of vengeance, and I will listen to thee."

"This night," returned Elinor, "Sir Albert is to steal away the Lady Constance. I know not whether she would have consented to this measure, had not I persuaded her: but I overcame her scruples; and I have promised to admit him into the garden, where she is to meet him.

"Thou, Elinor!" exclaimed Lord Frederic: "is this the friendship thou didst promise me?"

"I shall leave that to your own decision, my lord," replied she. "Here is the key of the garden-gate; and here is a white plume, which if you place in the front of your casque, Constance will fly to you as to Sir Albert, and you may bear her whither you will."

"My excellent Elinor?" cried he: "in this device I recognize thy genius. This will indeed avenge me on them both!"

"Nor is this all, my lord," resumed the damsel—"When once before, unsuspicious of this pre-occupation of her heart, I would have counselled you to propose to the Lady Constance a flight with you, to avoid the marriage to which I knew she was averse, you objected the detriment which might arise to your own fortunes, from an action which would so greatly irritate your father."

"I care not for that now," exclaimed the impetuous youth: "I would sacrifice my fortunes, nay my life, rather than miss this glorious opportunity."

"But you need endanger neither, my lord," returned the damsel—"I have offered to attend the Lady Constance in her flight; let me therefore return the following morning to the castle, and I will throw the imputation on Sir Albert, with such circumstances as shall not only prevent any suspicion from fastening on you, but shall determine both her father and your own to wreak on him the rage which the wrong they will suppose him to have done them will inspire."

However satisfactory Elinor had imagined the plot she had thus treacherously laid, would prove to Lord Frederic, his transports still exceeded her expectations. He promised her the most boundless rewards, and as an earnest of them, presented her with a rich jewel he wore on his finger.

She then quitted him, and hastened to the cottage, where Sir Albert had long waited in anxious expectation of her. When he saw her approach, he went hastily out to meet her, and demanded whether she had brought him the promised key?

"Alas! no, sir!" returned she, with a well-dissembled concern—" the Lady Constance has sent me the reluctant bearer of a message, which, I fear, will greatly disappoint,you: it will be impossible for her this night to leave the castle."

" Impossible!" exclaimed Sir Albert: "O Elinor! what cruel tidings dost thou bring me! Will Constance violate her promise?"

" Not willingly, valiant sir!" replied the damsel; " nor indeed are you to consider this any other than a short delay of a measure in which her happiness is, if possible, more concerned than your own. To-morrow night you may assure yourself she will be yours."

" But why not to-night?" cried he.

" Sir," answered Elinor, " when, after the Baron's departure, I went in quest of the key, I found that it had been removed from its customary place, and the Lady Constance soon learned, with great disquietude, that her father was gone from home on some sudden business, and that, uncertain at what hour he might return, he had taken with him the key of the garden, meaning to readmit himself that way, without obliging his family to watch for him."

" But if he has taken the key," cried Sir Albert impatiently, " why cannot I scale the wall? "

" Alas! sir," replied she, " and do you not then consider the danger of his returning at the moment to surprise you? should he meet you in your flight with the Lady Constance, what but eternal ruin to your hopes could be the consequence? He would certainly attempt to force her from you; and, should you defend her, think what would be her sensations should her father fall by your hand!"

Sir Albert was by no means disposed to content himself with this delay of his hopes, but Elinor said so much, and with such an appearance of a sincere attachment to his interests, that he was at last obliged to submit, and to consent to wait till the following night. The damsel promised to revisit him in the morning, to bring him word whether he might safely attempt another conference with the Lady Constance during the course of the day, and likewise to arrange with him finally the mode of her escape. She then quitted him, and went back to the castle of Hertzwald; when to her mistress, who had longed for her return, she accounted for the length of her absence, by feigning that Sir Albert had detained her with innumerable questions respecting all that had befallen the object of his love during their tedious separation. The deceived Constance was pleased at every instance of the tender interest he took in her concerns: yet, during the absence of Elinor, her resolution had begun to waver, and her apprehensions of the guilt she should contract, by a marriage contrary to the will of her father, had almost determined her to stay, and suffer him to sacrifice her happiness forever. But the crafty discourses of the damsel revived so strongly in her breast her horror for the Baron, and her love for the valiant Albert, that she was confirmed in her former intentions; and with a kind of dread lest further reflection should finally oblige her to renounce them, she awaited the hour appointed for her flight.

She retired earlier than usual to her chamber; for her consciousness of her intended disobedience overwhelmed her in the presence of her father, with all the confusion of guilt; and, unaccustomed to dissemble, she fancied that her every look betrayed the hidden purpose of her heart.

In her own chamber she wept for some time without restraint; while Elinor was busied in preparing such things as it was expedient she should be provided with on her journey.

In the meantime the family retired to rest, and the hour approached, at which Sir Albert was to arrive. The heart of Constance palpitated with expectation, and her tears ceased to flow. Nor had she expected long, before she descried a figure in the garden; his arms, as he advanced, glittered to the moonbeam; and he was soon so near, that she distinguished the white feather in his casque. He came under her window; and Elinor, apprehensive lest her mistress should observe that his voice was not that of Sir Albert, hastily desired him, in a whisper, not to speak, lest he should be heard by any one who might yet be stirring in the castle. He comprehended her meaning, and made her a sign of obedience. For Constance, it had been unnecessary to enjoin her silence;—for the first time in her life, she was about to commit an action, of which she doubted the propriety; and on that action the whole of her future fate was to depend:—her emotion was so strong, that it hardly left her the power of speech; and she would even yet have receded from her purpose, and remained at the castle, but Elinor reproached her irresolution, and represented to her, that if she neglected the present moment, escape at any future one would be impossible. She had previously provided a ladder of ropes, and the trembling Constance descended from the window.

Ere she reached the ground, her transported lover caught her to his breast; she was offended at a boldness so new to her, and disengaged herself from his arms, in a manner sufficiently expressive of her displeasure. Apprehensive of too soon alarming her, he restrained his passion, and with a respectful air, led her towards the gate of the garden, where a confidential servant was waiting with two fleet horses. He vaulted on one, taking before him in his arms his lovely and unsuspecting prize: his servant, in the same manner, took charge of Elinor: and applying spurs to their horses, they sat out with the utmost speed.

Meantime the real Sir Albert, little imagining for what purpose his name and crest had been assumed, had sat for some time, after the damsel had left him, indulging his disappointment at the message she had treacherously brought him. Maurice was not yet returned with the horses: Sir Albert wished for his arrival, that he might have with him one to whom he could speak freely on the subject which occupied him; and at last, impatiently rising, he walked forth into the forest, where for awhile he strolled, disquieting himself with inventing new obstacles which might arise to prevent the accomplishment of his hopes on the morrow. The night was now set in, and its shades seemed to offer some relief to the trouble of Sir Albert; for they revived in his memory the reflections which had agitated his mind, when, at a similar hour, he had traversed that part of the forest the preceding night; and when he recollected how invaluable he should then have thought the certainty which he now possessed, of the love of Constance, he was ashamed of having so far suffered the delay of the promise, which she still meant to fulfil, to prey upon his peace: he endeavored to divest himself of every desponding fear, and earnestly recommended the object of his affections to the protection of every Saint and holy Angel.

He then recollected, that, by wandering at so late an hour, he was detaining from rest the peasant to whose courtesy he was indebted for a lodging; but he had attended so little to his way, that he was at a loss to determine which path would lead him back to his cottage. He was still hesitating, when he descried at some distance, a light, glimmering through the trees. He hastened towards it; but soon perceived that it was brighter than could proceed from a candle in a peasant's window. Still he advanced:—it seemed to recede before him. Surprised and struck with some emotion of dread, he still followed it; when suddenly it sunk into the earth, and Sir Albert perceived that he was at the mouth of the *Cavern of Death.*

His dream, the strange accounts he had received at the castle of Dornheim, and the determination he had formed to explore the mysteries of that dismal place, of which the various events of the day had suspended the remembrance, now rushed at once upon his mind; the disappointment which had prevented his quitting the forest that night, now appeared to him the interposition of that destiny which had reserved him for the discovery of some dire secret; and he resolved immediately to attempt the adventure, to which the inward presages of his soul so strongly impelled him

The night was not dusk; but, in that spot, the thick shadow of the trees diffused a gloom through which objects were scarce discernible; yet a few gleams of light were reflected by a narrow but rapid stream, which having its source in the innermost part of the Cavern, forced its passage through the rocks, a little below the only entrance it presented to human feet. That entrance, for many years untrod, was half overgrown by briars, amid which screamed the birds of night. Sir Albert attempted to separate the branches; but the want of a light embarrassed him; and, but a few paces beyond the mouth of the Cavern, the darkness was total. He judged it necessary to return to the peasant's cottage to procure a torch: as he now knew in what part of the forest he was, he found the way thither without difficulty.

At the door he was met by Maurice, who was arrived then with his horses, and who had wondered at his absence, knowing that it was already the hour at which he had appointed to repair to the castle of Hertzwald. Sir Albert acquainted him with the alteration that had taken place in his schemes, and with his intention to enter immediately the *Cavern of Death.* Maurice heard him with visible consternation, and would have remonstrated; but Sir Albert interrupted him—

"Be satisfied," said he, "that I require not thee to follow me. Wert thou less superstitiously fearful, thy company on such an adventure, would to myself diminish the sensation of awe with which my mind is even painfully impressed; but coward as thou art, thou couldst afford me no assistance. Remain here with my horses, and await my return.—If no evil befall me, thou shalt see me ere the morning dawn."

He then went into the cottage, and demanded a torch. When the peasant heard the purpose for which he required it, he expressed the same horror which was visible in the countenances of all in whose presence the *Cavern of Death* was named.

"Alas! valiant sir!" cried he, "what desperate project have you formed? No human being has ever entered it, and returned to the regions of the living."

Sir Albert continued unshaken in his resolution.—The peasant reluctantly gave him a torch, and he returned alone to the mouth of the Cavern.

When he reached it, he again attempted to disentangle the briars which obstructed his entrance: but finding it difficult, he drew his sword, and with that soon opened himself a passage. The birds, which had long been accustomed to roost undisturbed among their branches, now roused, flew out in such numbers, that Sir Albert found it necessary to retire a few steps, lest, as they all made towards the light, the motion of their wings should extinguish his torch. When they were dispersed, he again advanced; and finding the passage now clear, he commended himself to the protection of his tutelary saint, and entered the Cavern. For a few paces he proceeded with his sword still drawn; but his path soon became so difficult, by reason of the large fragments of the broken rocks over which he was obliged to climb, that he found it necessary to sheath it, that he might be at liberty to assist himself with his hand; and indeed of no encounter with such enemies as it might avail against, had he, in that place, any apprehension.

As he advanced, the horrors of the Cavern seemed to deepen. The chill damp air froze the current of his blood: the silence was only broken, at distant intervals, by droppings from the roof, encrusted with half congealed vapors. At every step he trod more lightly; and if sometimes his foot slid upon a smooth and slippery stone, his heart at the sound beat with a quicker motion. By degrees, he approached the bed of the subterraneous stream which he had observed issuing near the mouth of the Cavern; and the death-like stillness of the place was interrupted by the noise of its current, first, murmuring at a distance, then, as his path wound nearer to it, roaring with impetuous fury over the rough rocks which obstructed its course.

Sir Albert now found himself obliged to stoop, for the roof was too low to permit him to walk upright. He advanced, and it became still lower; but, after he had proceeded a few steps on his hands and knees, it suddenly widened, and he found himself in a spacious and lofty part of the Cavern; though neither of its extent nor height could he form any accurate judgment, for its bounds were lost in impenetrable darkness. In that thick and obscure air, his torch cast no light but on the hand which bore it. Only when he climbed the steep banks which overhung the stream, the white foam of its waters enabled him to trace its course, where it fell from a high rock in a broken cataract.

The deafening noise of the torrent filled the soul of Sir Albert with an unknown horror: he descended precipitately from the bank, and retreated to a rock, which seemed on one side the boundary of the Cavern; against which he leaned, while his imagination, unrelieved by any visible object, and wholly occupied in the recollection of his dream, was left at liberty to represent him, now, the hideous phantom hovering in the dusky air, and now, the fleshless warrior, shunning his embrace, and waving high the fatal sword.

Sir Albert did not long give way to these visionary fears, but strove by reflection to recall the firmness, which, at no moment of real danger, ever had forsaken him. He was ashamed of his weakness; and recollecting that no circumstance which could authorise it had as yet occurred, he withdrew his arm from the rock, and would have proceeded to explore farther when he felt himself suddenly drawn back;—his heart gave a fearful beat; he turned his head with perturbation, but saw nothing near him; he looked eagerly on all sides, and at last, concluding his own terror had deceived him, he would again have advanced from that spot, when again he felt himself drawn back; and instantly a form, to which even his fancy could assign no certain shape, flitted by him through a chasm in the rock, which the darkness had before prevented his observing, but which, when he approached it, opened to his view a long narrow passage, leading downwards with a steep descent, at the further extremity of which he descried a small red flame; it resembled the dog-star, when he sets bloodily in a misty horizon.

Sir Albert now summoned all his resolution, and descended the path.—Hitherto, the ground on which he had trodden had been hard and rocky; but now, at every step his feet sunk into a loose dry sand. Guided by the flame, which grew larger and brighter as he advanced, he soon reached a small and nearly circular vault, entirely illuminated by its radiance; and beyond this no further path appeared.

In this spot, thus supernaturally pointed out to him, Sir Albert was persuaded he was to meet the conclusion of the adventure. He crossed himself, and implored the protection of the holy Angels; then, fixing his eyes on the flame, which hung in the air considerably above his head, he observed that it darted downwards, in a spiral ray, on a spot where the sand rose in a little hillock: and he heard around him a faint sound, like the fluttering of distant pinions. He regarded the hillock, and observed somewhat glittering beneath the surface: he stooped, and removing a little of the sand, discovered the blade of a sword; but what were his emotions, when he perceived that the hilt was grasped by the dry cold hand of a skeleton!

The words of the phantom who had visited him in his sleep, were instantly present to his remembrance: and he dropped kneeling on the earth.

"Yes, injured spirit?" exclaimed he; "thou whom I know not by what name to address, but who hast questionless led me hither, and art now invisibly present to my invocation! I receive thy gift! and I swear to allow myself no rest, till the vengeance shall be completed, in which, though by what mysterious connexion as yet I comprehend not, thou hast taught me to believe my own destiny involved!"

As he uttered these words, with an awe which half checked his voice, he extended his hand to take the sword; and instantly at his touch, the bony fingers which held it unclosed themselves, and left it in his grasp. At the same moment the flame, with a vivid flash, disappeared; and a sudden whirlwind arising extinguished the torch, and involved Sir Albert in an eddy of the sand.

His soul, already worked up to the highest pitch of horror, now fainted within him; and he sunk on the ground, almost as lifeless as the ghastly form which lay beside him. He continued for some time devoid of all sensation; and, when his recollection returned to him, as he unclosed his eyes in total darkness, he felt that his hand was laid on that of the skeleton. —He drew it back with hasty terror.—He again made an effort to recover his fortitude; and, rising, he listened to the rushing of the torrent, and hoped, by following that sound, to find the passage between the rocks by which he had entered that recess. But suddenly it was rendered visible to him by a light which streamed through it from the outer part of the Cavern. He approached, and perceived several lights moving in different directions across the further entrance; and he imagined he heard the steps of feet, and the clash of arms; when, in an instant, a cry of horror, uttered by many united voices, assailed his ear; and amid the inarticulate shrieks of some, he could distinguish that others, exclaimed, "blood! a cataract of blood."

The Cavern now shook from its foundations, and the voices were at once lost in a crash, which seemed as if the whole frame of nature were violently rent asunder. The sound was reverberated from the hollow sides of the Cavern in repeated echos, which by degrees died away, and again no noise was heard, beside the rushing of the torrent.

The lights had disappeared, yet still a faint glimmering remained, which enabled Sir Albert to discern the passage. Still grasping the fatal sword, he now reascended his former path, and, on issuing out into the open part of the Cavern, he perceived that the glimmering he had observed was that of a torch, which lay unextinguished on the ground. Rejoiced to recover a light, he took it up, and soon discovered that the violent noise he had heard, had been occasioned by the fall of a huge fragment of the rock, under which, on a further examination, he perceived the mangled bodies of two men, whom its enormous weight had crushed.—Struck with new horror, he was regarding these wretched victims, when he heard behind him a deep and agonizing groan.—He started!—and after some interval, it was repeated.—He turned; and looking round, he at last descried an armed figure, lying prostrate on the earth.—As he approached him, this unknown person groaned again.

"Who art thou?" cried Sir Albert, bending over to regard him; "and what purpose led thee hither?"

The stranger, at the sound of a human voice, half raised his head, and discovered to Sir Albert the features of the Baron of Dornheim?—Astonished, and scarcely crediting his eyes, he stood for a moment silent; while the Baron, on beholding him, shrunk aghast! and again turning his face to the earth, lifted up his arm, as if to shroud himself from the view of some terrific object.

"Whither wouldst thou drag me, avenging spirit?" exclaimed he, with a faint and trembling voice.

Sir Albert, accosting him by his name, demanded to whom he addressed himself, and what had thus strangely agitated him; but to all his questions he returned such disordered answers, as induced the Knight to believe that distraction had seized him. At last the baron, with a sudden start, again raised his head, and leaning on his arm, regarded Sir Albert with a fixed horror.

"Why do you thus wildly gaze on me?" cried the Knight, "do you not know me?"

"Know thee!" exclaimed the Baron; "Ah! too well I know thee!—And that sword? The moment threatened by the phantom is arrived, and already is my family extinguished on the earth!"

"My lord!" said Sir Albert, "these words bear no common meaning; and circumstanced as I am, they concern me too nearly to suffer me to forbear insisting on an explanation of them.—Rise! and prepare immediately to answer the demand which the events of this night sufficiently authorise me to make."

The Baron rose, as if awed by some power he durst not disobey; but presently starting with new affright—"Yon ghastly vision!" exclaimed he; "that crimson torrent!—Save me—hide me from the victim!"

"These are the terrors of guilt my lord!" cried Sir Albert; "and vainly would you strive to escape the visions created by your own accusing conscience."

"Vainly indeed!" replied the Baron—"yet, if thou wouldst hear the dire disclosure I must make to thee, in pity lead me from this scene of horror!—here I cannot!—it is impossible?—they haunt me—the dæmons of vengeance haunt me, and the unappeased spirit of the dead hovers around me, and urges them to seize their prey!"

Sir Albert saw, that in effect his mind was too much disordered to permit him to make any connected narration in that dreary place, which impressed with dismay the heart even of the innocent; and he led the way towards the mouth of the Cavern while the Baron followed him with unsteady steps.

They were in the narrowest part of their passage, when the light of Sir Albert's torch was reflected by the gleam of armour; he looked, and beheld a man half hid in a cavity of the rock. On finding himself discovered, the stranger came forth trembling, and falling on his knees, petitioned for his life. The Knight demanded wherefore he had sought to conceal himself? He acknowledged that he was one of the vassals of the Baron of Dornheim, by whom he had been brought into the Cavern to assassinate Sir Albert.

"Is this true, my lord?" said the Knight, looking sternly around.

"It is most true," replied the Baron—"such was indeed my purpose; but the agents of an invisible world have interposed, and I have vainly striven to resist the decrees of fate."

Sir Albert ordered the man to rise and follow them; and soon emerging from the Cavern, though night still reigned profound amid the forest, her shadows, to the eyes of those who had so long been buried in that region of subterranean darkness appeared almost the refulgence of day.

At the earnest entreaty of the Baron, Sir Albert advanced some paces, till they had reached a spot, out of hearing of the sound of the murmuring current: there pausing—"and now, my lord!" said he, "I will proceed no further, till you shall have fully explained to me, as I know you are well able to do, the mysteries which the recesses of yon Cave enfold. Why are you thus aghast when you behold this sword? And who was the murdered warrior in whose fleshless hand I have found it?"

"That murdered warrior," replied the Baron, "was thy father!"

Sir Albert started!

"And in me," continued the Baron, "thou viewest his murderer!"

Sir Albert's hair stood erect with horror, and his eyes sparkled with unutterable fury.

"Suspend thy vengeance till thou hast heard me further." resumed the Baron: "I feel that the hour of retribution is arrived, and a power more than mortal compels me to unfold the tale I tremble to pronounce.

"Rodolph, Baron of Dornheim, was thy father. He was my brother—my elder brother; and from the Holy Land was he returning, to claim the inheritance which, at the death of our common parent, devolved of right to him, when I, covetous to possess it, met him in this forest, with a band of ruffians devoted to my interest. He was alone; but, with his native valor, and with that sword, which had often drank deeply of the blood of Infidels, he long defended himself against his assassins. At last, overpowered by numbers, he fell; and, in the convulsions of death, he so strongly grasped the hilt, that one of my men, unable to force it from him, was about to strike off the hand which held it, when I forbade him. To none of the brave Knights who had warred in Palestine was the sword of Rodolph unknown; and, should it be found in my possession, or in that of any of my people, a discovery that he had perished by our hands might have ensued:—I therefore commanded them to forego the rich spoil, and to conceal it, with the body, in the innermost recesses of yon gloomy Cavern. A report of his death upon the journey was then circulated; and no suspicion of my concern in it arising in the minds of any, I succeeded to the vacant Barony, of which I have ever since, in the opinion of the world, been the undisturbed possessor. But the world has not known the secrets of my own guilty heart. Often, at the still and solemn hour of midnight has the spirit of my murdered brother visited me; sometimes in silence pointing to his wounds, and waving his bloody sword, sometimes threatening me with vengeance, in a voice, of which, even in the hours of apparent festivity, the sound has ever continued in my ears.—Of five former sons whom I have lost, the untimely deaths were announced to me by this phantom; but the great and final stroke which was to complete the measure of my punishment, and forever cut off my family from the earth, he taught me to expect at the moment in which his sword should pass into the possession of his own rightful heir.—With what terror I have awaited that moment, those only can know, who, like me, have known the guilt of blood:—from a faint hope to evade the menance, I have made repeated efforts to regain the sword; but the fear lest I should expose my crime to detection, forbade me to employ for that purpose any but those who had been my former accomplices; they severally attempted it; but their courage proved unequal to encounter the horrors of the Cavern. Meanwhile, I had recourse to every means, to discover who was that heir to whom the sword was destined, I could obtain no further information, than that Rodolph, ere he went to the Holy Land, had espoused a lady at *Prague*, under a feigned name, lest my father, who had destined him for another alliance, should be made acquainted with the marriage; but what afterwards became of that lady, or whether she had borne him another son, I could never learn, but continued in a state of the most painful uncertainty till yesternight, when, on your first entrance, I for a moment fancied you the visionary object of my nightly terrors:—Your name was repeated by my son, and I strove to suppress my strong emotions; but still your resemblance to the noble Rodolph had filled my mind with dire forebodings, and your ring too certainly confirmed them, for well did I remember it in the possession of my brother. This morning, your own narration explained to me every circumstance which could yet give rise to any doubts. From that moment, your death was determined; and already had I concerted the plan of your assassination, when with dismay I learned that you were gone to explore the recesses of the *Cavern of Death.* The moment which was to restore to you the sword of your father, seemed now at hand:—by one desperate effort could I only hope to avert the fate impending o'er my house;—and to that effort some supernatural impulse seemed to urge me on, and to overpower the dread, with which even the distant view of a place which I fancied conscious of my crime, had hitherto inspired me.—I armed as many of my vassals as I durst confide in, and at their head I entered the Cavern, hoping to find you, bewildered in its labyrinths, ere you should have seized the sword on which my destiny depended. Animated by this idea, neither I, nor two of my accomplices in the murder of your father, the only two who still survived, seemed to remember our former guilty dread, till we reached the spacious vault in which you found me. There the awful rush of the torrent struck upon our souls, and in a moment revived our terrors. We ascended its bank—we beheld the foaming cataract—to our eyes it seemed a cataract of blood!—those of my attendants whose consciences accused them of no former crimes, uttered a cry of dismay at the dire prodigy, and fled; but we, whose hand had been crimsoned with the blood of Rodolph, stood, rivetted by horror to the spot—but we stood not long, before the fall of the impending rock overwhelmed my two companions, of whom one was Maurice, your Esquire, but my ancient vassal."

"Maurice!" exclaimed Sir Albert; "was he disloyal?"

"From the moment when I acquainted him with your birth," returned the Baron, "his fears concurred with his former attachment to me, and with the rewards I offered, to induce him to betray to me your every design. It was from him I learned your purpose of entering the Cavern."

The Baron was proceeding, when the trampling of horses interrupted him:—he paused; and Sir Albert, looking round, descried a troop of men, who guided by the light he bore, were hastening towards him. On their nearer approach, it was discernible that four among them, who were on foot, bore a corpse, on a bier made of interwoven boughs. The Baron's mind misgave him; he eagerly questioned them, and, while they hesitated to answer, he forced a passage through them, and rushed to meet the corpse; he recognised the pale and blood-stained features of his son.

The bearers sat down their load.—The Baron uttered not a word, but threw himself on the bier, and in convulsive sobs, gave vent to the passions which agonized his soul.—Sir Albert drew near, and with strong emotions beheld the face of Lord Frederic.—The Baron suddenly turned, and before he was aware of his purpose, snatched from his hand the sword of Rodolph, and plunging it in his own breast, sunk expiring on the body of his son.—The horsemen alighted, and crowded round him; but succor was too late;—pointing to Sir Albert, in a faultering accent he bade them regard in him their rightful lord; and then, drawing forth the weapon from the wound, his life issued with it, in a stream of blood.

Sir Albert, falling on his knees, awfully adored the severe justice of the Almighty Avenger of the crime of mortals.

Those who surrounded the bier, all vassals of the Barony of

Dornheim, were struck with consternation at this fatal catastrophe, and eagerly inquired of each other the meaning of their late master's dying words. Sir Albert, in succinct terms, and without expatiating on the guilt of him who lay lifeless before them, acquainted them with the discoveries which that night had brought forth; a narration confirmed by him who had been found concealed in the Cavern, and who had been present at the Baron's confession; and all most readily acknowledged the son of Rodolph as their lord, and entreated him to suffer them immediately to conduct him to the Castle. He complied with their request, and proceeded thither with them; whilst those who had before borne the body of Lord Frederic, now bore that of his father with it on the same bier.

On their way, Sir Albert demanded the particulars of the death of the former.—They confessed, that the Baron had sent them with orders to lie in wait for Sir Albert himself; but that the similarity of the arms and vestments of Lord Frederic had deceived them, and assaulting him, they had not discovered their mistake till he had fallen beneath their swords.

When they reached the castle, where the chief officers and most of the domestics were in waiting to readmit their lord, the tidings they brought of his death at first diffused a general dismay; but Sir Albert convened the vassals in the great hall, and in a modest, but forcible address, stated to them his claim to the succession, and adduced such proofs as left them no room to question his right to the domains of his ancestors. Many of the older men who were present, remembered Lord Rodolph, and loved his memory; and they, with acclamations of joy, retraced his features in those of his son; and, as the character of the late Baron had not been such as to engage the affections of any of his people, there were none who did not receive their new lord with demonstrations of unfeigned gladness.

Sir Albert now wished to be alone, that he might reflect at leisure on the extraordinary events of the night, and compose the agitation of spirits into which so many unexpected discoveries had thrown him. But, as he was proceeding along a passage, in his way to a private apartment, the seneschal followed him, and demanded what he would have done with regard to two ladies who had been brought that night to the castle, by the order of the late Baron. Sir Albert, demanded who they were: the seneschal unlocked the door of an apartment on one side of the passage, and Sir Albert beheld the Lady Constance! Surprised and delighted, he flew towards her; but her astonishment and joy seemed even to exceed his own.

"By what miracle art thou preserved?" cried she: "What Guardian Power has delivered thee from the foes by whom, when they tore me from thee, I left thee encircled?"

Her words seemed at first mysterious to Sir Albert; but Elinor, finding it impossible to avoid the discovery of her treason, threw herself at their feet, and voluntarily confessed it; and then it appeared, that after the Lady Constance, deceived by her arts, had betrayed herself into the power of Lord Frederic, she was still unconscious of her mistake, when they were assaulted by the troop which the Baron, informed by the similar treachery of Maurice of her intended flight with Sir Albert, had sent out to intercept them: that Lord Frederic had been obliged to set her down in order to defend himself; and that two of the troop, in compliance with the orders they had received, had immediately seized herself and Elinor, and had borne them to the castle, which they had reached about an hour before; during which interval she had abandoned herself to the bitterest grief, and had incessantly wept the inevitable death of the imaginary Sir Albert.

The morning now began to dawn; and Sir Albert immediately despatched a messenger to her father, to inform him of the death of the late Baron, and his own succession, in right of his father, Lord Rudolph—to acquaint him that his daughter was at the castle; and to invite him thither, to learn such further particulars as it was expedient he should know.

The invitation was immediately complied with; nor was Sir Albert deceived in his hope, that he who had been about, from motives of interest, to sacrifice his only child to a man so unworthy to possess her, would, with equal readiness, consent to bestow her on himself, who now enjoyed the power and dignities of his late rival. His proposals were received with manifest joy; and, till the marriage could be celebrated with proper magnificence, the Lady Constance returned with her father to the castle of Heitzwald, where, during that interval, Sir Albert, now universally acknowledged Baron of Dornheim, daily visited her.

He caused the bodies of the late usurper and his son to be privately interred: but the remains of his unhappy father, himself, at the head of a large body of his vassals, reentered the *Cavern of Death* to bring forth; and mourning his untimely fate with the deepest expressions of filial sorrow, he caused them to be deposited, with the most solemn rites of the Church, and every funeral honor, in the chapel of the castle: erecting over them a magnificent tomb, above which was suspended the fatal sword.

Shortly after, he espoused the Lady Constance; and in the hand of her who had been the object of his earliest affections, he received the completion of that felicity to which his virtues entitled him.

THE MYSTERIOUS BELL.

It was a dead calm: the sun beamed bright and beautiful upon the ocean, in setting glory, and all life and animation had given place to that overpowering listlessness, which none can form any conception of, but they who have experienced a long continued calm at sea.

I was leaning against the taffrail, gazing upon the dark waters below, in that state of apathy, in which thought, itself, becomes almost too great an exertion, when suddenly a gentle breath of wind, that swept along so lightly as to cause no ripple upon the glossy surface of the waveless deep, wafted to my awakened sense, a tinkling sound, like the ringing of a small bell at an immense distance. The unusual circumstance aroused my dormant faculties, and I listened with breathless attention; but the flaw had passed, and all was again silent and death-like.

I remained upon the same spot nearly an hour, but it came not again; and at length overcome with drowsiness, I retired to my birth. The next morning when I came upon deck, I found that the calm still continued, and the Captain was of opinion that it would last some days. I mentioned to him the incident that had attracted my attention; but he laughed, and said I had been dreaming. He knew we were too far from land for any sound to reach us, and no vessel he said could have been near enough for me to hear the ringing of the bell, without also being in sight. The mate agreed with him, but I observed one weather beaten tar who was standing near, to shake his head doubtfully, and his rugged countenance betrayed great anxiety; but he said nothing. The morning passed away, still the sea was unruffled by any breeze. After dinner, to while away the tedious hours, the Captain and I sat down upon the quarter deck to cards. We had scarcely commenced playing, when I was startled by hearing the same bell-like tones, so faint and far, that "nothing lived 'twixt them and silence." I called to the Captain to listen; he sat a moment without speaking, and then started up, exclaiming, "I hear it, too." The sailors seemed to have noticed it also, for they were hushed, and listening. The Captain went aloft with his glass, and looked in every direction. "I hear it," said he, "distinctly, but I can see nothing; it cannot be from shore, for we are more than fifty leagues from any land." The attention of all on board was now fully awake. The sailors stood upon the forecastle in anxious groups, all but the old man, the singular expression of whose features I had remarked in the morning. He sat upon the windlass, with his hands folded, and his eyes intently fixed upon the deck: but still he spoke not. Various conjectures were hazarded among us, but none that satisfactorily accounted for the noise.

The afternoon passed, and the sun again set, while the tinkling sound still came floating over the waters. It was late before sleep closed my eyes that night. When the morning of the next day dawned, the Captain went again to the mast head with his glass, but no sail appeared upon the horizon; yet still the ceaseless bell was plainly to be heard, while not a breath of wind could be felt. Noon came, and still the calm continued, and the sound approached nearer and nearer, when on a sudden, the Captain from the top cried out, "I see it now, but what it is, God only knows: it does not look like any craft that ever the hand of man fashioned." We all rushed to the forecastle, and in silence awaited the approach of this strange navigator. It came careering over the waters with a rapid motion, and as it drew near, exhibited to our wondering gaze a single black mast, rising from the centre of what seemed a square and solid block of wood, but without yard or sail, nor did any living creature appear upon it. I proposed to take the boat and board it; but the sailors shook their heads, and the Captain was silent. Determined to discover the meaning of this phenomenon, I jumped into the boat, intending to scull towards it, when the old sailor, seeing my resolution, declared that he would go with me; and the Captain, after a moment's hesitation, also joined us. We rowed swiftly onwards to meet the object of our curiosity, which was now within half a mile of the ship, and in a few minutes, were sufficiently near to perceive the bell at the top of the mast, the ringing of which had announced its coming. It was green and rusty as if with age, and the sides of the nondescript barque were covered with barnacles, and tangled masses of seaweed. Immediately beneath the bell, which still swung from side to side with deafening din, was attached a deep sea line, passing over the side and descending into the water. The moment our boat touched this strange vessel, the bell ceased to toll, and the floating mass became immoveable. We gazed upon it, and upon each other in amazement; and at length, the Captain in a low and tremulous voice, proposed to return, but the sailor said "No!—it was an evil hour when we met this accursed"——(his voice sunk, and I could not distinguish what he uttered) "but we *have* met it, and we must not leave it thus. Let us haul upon this line." We did so for nearly twenty minutes, but with great difficulty, for it seemed as if some pond rous body at the extremity, resisted our efforts.

At length the profound stillness that had hitherto prevailed amongst us, was broken by the Captain, who looked down into the water, and exclaimed, "Great God! what have we here?" We followed with our eyes the motion of his hand, and saw a large object glistening white beneath the waves, and appearing like a gigantic corpse, wrapped in a white cloth and bound with cords. "Now may heaven shield us!" said the seaman, in a husky voice, "it is the shrouded Demon of the Sea." As he spoke he drew his knife from his belt, and in an instant severed the line. The body turned its white sides flashing through the dark waters, and with the rapidity of lightning, disappeared from our view

THE DERVISE ALFOURAN.

Alfouran, by the sanctity of his manners, and the abstemiousness of his diet, had gained the hearts of the whole province of Eyraca: but none was more captivated with the holy Dervise than Sanballad, the son of a merchant in Bassora; whose father intended to bring him up in the mercantile business, which he himself professed. The hermitage of Alfouran was situated in a wood, near the suburbs of the city: it was formed out of a stupendous rock, in the inside of a mountain; and contained two cells, the outermost of which served for the common purposes of life, and the innermost was set apart for the private devotions and religious ceremonies of the sanctified Dervise.

A small spring, which ran trickling down the rock, supplied him with the purest water, and fell into a basin, which the industrious Alfouran had scooped out of the bottom of the rock, from which the water overflowing, descended in a gentle rill to the wood, and ran purling among the trees; sometimes discovering itself by its glittering surface, and sometimes gliding imperceptibly through the thickest bushes, which grew upon its banks. A little plain opened before the door of the cell, which, by the shade of the lofty trees that surrounded it, and the constant attention of the sage to sprinkle its surface, ever preserved a most beautiful verdure. The tall and straight cedars and palms which overshadowed this delightful retreat, at once secured it from the scorching sun, and afforded a most beautiful and majestic appearance, mixed with an awful solemnity, which struck the heart, and demanded the reverence of every beholder.

To this habitation of Alfouran did thousands resort, at the rising of the sun, to hear the instructions of his mouth, and dwell upon the sweet accents of his persuasive tongue; even the labours of the day were forgotten while he charmed their ears; and the poorest subjects of Bassora refused not to follow the sage Alfouran, though the work of their hands was neglected and undone.

The pious Sanballad was ever a constant attendant at these captivating lectures, and drank deep of the instructions of the Dervise of Bassora. His soul was animated by the example of the self-denying sage : he scorned the mean employments of a dirty world, and sought earnestly to bury himself in the glorious solitude of Alfouran.

One day, after the Dervise had been exhorting his hearers to trouble themselves no longer with the concerns of life, nor the transactions of mortality, Sanballad presented himself before him, and having done obeisance to the holy man, he entreated Alfouran to initiate him into the mysteries of his happy life.

Alfouran looked earnestly at the youth ; he beheld his complexion, his modest beauties, his eyes streaming with penitential tears, and his heart heaving with the full sighs of sorrow and contrition. 'And canst thou, O young man,' said the Dervise, 'leave the vanities of this life, to spend in solitude and abstemiousness the sprightly hours of youth ? Canst thou quit all worldly connections, thy friends, thy relations, thy engagements, thy business, and thy pleasures, and prefer before them the constant company of an aged Dervise ? If thou art so resolved, let me first have a trial of thy faith and submission.—Ascend this craggy rock by the steps which I have hewn in its side, and sit on the stone which is dedicated, on its surface, to the pure solar Fire. There remain while the sun melts thee by day, and the cold pinches thee by night, till three days are accomplished ; and I will bring thee of the choicest viands which the rich men of Bassora send daily to tempt my appetite ; of which if thou tastest, or to which if thou dost incline thy mind, the curse of the god of fire be upon thee!'

At this command, Sanballad arose with joyful looks, and began to ascend the holy mountain.

He spent the first day in a solemn silence, not daring even to look up or move from his posture ; but kept his eyes fixed on the ground, and in secret implored the strengthening assistance of the Founder of his faith.

The second day, Alfouran set before him a sumptuous banquet, which his disciples, at his command, had brought from the city : for it was daily the custom of Alfouran to receive such presents at their hands ;—not, as he said, for his own use, but to fix him steadfastly in his forbearance from those pampering repasts. They stood every day exposed on a table formed out of the living rock in his cell ; and at noon the Dervise ascended the hill, to burn them at the holy fire, which he kindled from the Sun. Sanballad looked not at the tempting viands till Alfouran commanded him, and then persisted religiously in his resolutions ; which when the Dervise perceived, he extolled his faith, and exhorted him to continue obedient to the instructions he had received.

The third day, the poor youth was nearly exhausted with watching and fatigue ; nevertheless, Alfouran endeavoured, by the most artful temptations, to draw him from his purpose, but in vain; the pious Sanballad triumphed over his temptations, and at length fulfilled his commands.

Being now partly initiated, the Dervise, after having fed him, conducted him down from the mountain to the cell beneath; and leaving him for some time to rest and refreshment, he alone ascended with his daily offerings to the altar of Fire.

In this act of devotion Alfouran continued the remainder of the day; during which time, Sanballad heard the most ravishing music, which seemed to descend through the mountain, and filled the cells with its enchanting harmony.

And thus was the Dervise's time divided;—in the morning he preached to the multitude, whilst the careful Sanballad received their offerings, and laid them on the stone table in the cell. At noon the Dervise ascended with the offerings, and the young man was ordered to pursue his private devotions in the innermost cell; and was taught to expect those heavenly sounds, if his prayers were accepted. When the sun left the horizon, Alfouran descended to the plain, where Sanballad spread some roots on the turf by the spring, and the Dervise and his scholar made their single and abstemious meal.

The young Dervise was enraptured at the precepts and sanctity of his master: and the inhabitants of Bassora brought daily their riches, and fine vestments, and delicacies, that Alfouran might sacrifice those unworthy objects of their affection on the altar of the Sun.

Nor were the prayers of Sanballad rejected, for he daily obtained a grateful token from the powers he worshipped, and was charmed with the heavenly music which sounded through the rock.

In this manner did Alfouran and his pupil dedicate their time to the invincible powers of Fire, till the whole city of Bassora was converted to the religion of the Dervise: and, neglecting their trade, they all flocked regularly to imbibe the instructions of his lips.

But what, even in the midst of his sanctity, preyed upon the heart of Sanballad was, that his master Alfouran did not suffer him to ascend the mountain. When he asked the Dervise the reason why he was denied that holy office?—Alfouran would answer: 'Know, O young man, that he only is fit to make such a sacrifice, who, by long and patient abstemiousness, has sanctified his mind, and purged it from the desires of mortality. No, Sanballad; you must serve a longer term of years, and persist in your religion for many suns, ere you be admitted to that, the greatest and noblest work of man: wait, therefore, with submission; and doubt not, but, when thou art accepted, the deity of Fire will call thee to his service.'

If Sanballad's impetuous desires to serve, like Alfouran, in the cell of the worshipper of Fire, could drive him, against the inclinations and commands of his parents, to act under the banners of Alfouran, it is not to be wondered, that he was now as eager in desiring to be jointly admitted into all the services of his master.

The bed or resting place of Sanballad was on the stone table in the outward cell; Alfouran slept on a floor of flints within.

It was the hour of midnight; when Sanballad, still revolving his favourite desires in his mind, heard the wind rustle through the grove; the moon played on the surface of the water, in the basin which stood without: when, on a sudden, Sanballad seemed to discern at the door of the cell the figure of a little old man: he immediately endeavoured to cry out to Alfouran; but he found his tongue cleave to the roof of his mouth. The little figure advanced, and stood before the astonished and motionless Sanballad.

'I am,' said the spectre, 'the good Genius which presides over thy wayward fate. Alfouran, this very night, did meditate thy death, and intended to sacrifice thee to his barbarous god. You are, young man, too inquisitive for this mysterious religion, which requires a blind and unsuspicious faith: but, in compassion to thy youth, and being willing to vindicate the truth of thy much-injured Prophet, I have taken this opportunity, while Alfouran is in his first sleep, to warn thee of thy danger. I must not assist thee farther; for, the impostor pessesses the signet of the Genius Nadoc, which he stole from a Bramin of the most exalted piety. But if thou art resolute, go fearless into his cell, and boldly thrust thy hand into his bosom, where it ever lies concealed. If thou canst but for a moment snatch it from him, thou art safe: for, when it is in thy hand, its virtues will be obedient to you, its possessor: be confident, therefore, and forget not, when thou hast it in thy hand, to make a proper use of it.'

'And how is it to be used?' replied the astonished Sanballad.

'Wish,' said the Genius, 'for whatever you desire, and it will not be denied you.—But hasten, O young man! for I foresee Alfouran will in a few minutes awake.'

At this exhortation, Sanballad arose from his bed, and entered into the cell of the treacherous Alfouran. He felt gently for his master, who was stretched upon the flints; and, having found his bosom, boldly put his hand therein, and felt the signet of the Genius Nadoc; which he immediately pulled out, and by the force of his arm awakened the affrighted Dervise.

Sanballad, seeing Alfouran awake, wished that he had completed his purpose, that he might have escaped out of the cell while the Dervise had slept.

No sooner had Sanballad formed his wish, than Alfouran sunk again into a deep sleep; and the young man, perceiving the power which the signet of the Genius Nadoc had given him, blessed Mahomet his prophet, and hastened out of the cell:

and on the plain before the door, he met his faithful Genius Mamlouk.

'I see,' said his instructer, 'thou hast wisely prevailed: and now, O Sanballad, we will together ascend this mountain; and I will convince thee of the folly of thy worship.'

Having thus said, Mamlouk led the way, and, having climbed to the altar, on the surface of the mountain, the Genius desired Sanballad to move the altar from its place.

'O Mamlouk,' said Sanballad, 'that is far beyond my strength: for when I sat on this stone, as a probationer before the Sun, I assayed with all my strength to move it: and could not.'

'That was,' replied Mamlouk, 'because Alfouran commanded it to continue firm and fixed: but now his power is no more.'

Sanballad then set his shoulder against the stone, and moved it from its place. The stone being removed, discovered a dark winding stair-case, cut out of the rock, which descended into the body of the mountain.

Mamlouk commanded Sanballad to descend, and fear not: 'For,' said the Genius, 'I will attend you, though invisible, and instruct you in what manner you are to behave: but be resolute in preserving the signet of the Genius Nadoc.'

Sanballad then began to descend the steps, which wound round a solid pillar of stone. After he had passed three hundred stairs, he met with a strong wicket, which he commanded to open; and then continued to pursue his way through a dark and close passage, cut out of the living rock.

At the end of this passage, he found a door of solid iron, which, at his command, creaked on its hinges, and opening, presented to his view a large cavern, illuminated in the centre with an enormous glowing carbuncle. Around this spacious vault hung all the rich and valuable garments, which the deceitful Alfouran had begged from the deluded inhabitants of Bassora, as offerings to his god.

'And what,' said Sanballad to his invisible guide, 'was the design of Alfouran in collecting these riches, since he never makes any use of them?'

'Proceed,' said Mamlouk; 'and observe.'

In one corner of this cavern, Sanballad perceived a chasm in the rock, which he immediately commanded to open; and which let him through its sides into another passage, wider than the first, supported by pillars, and enlightened with a variety of carbuncles.

As soon as Sanballad had entered this passage, he heard the sounds of many instruments, playing the most plaintive notes, and presently, at the lower end, he saw a number of close-veiled matrons marching with solemn steps along the avenues of the passage.

'May I, O Mamlouk,' said Sanballad, 'wish that these may receive me as they used to receive Alfouran?'

'Yes,' replied Mamlouk, 'I find thou hast wished it in thine heart; for they already begin to acknowledge thee.'

As Mamlouk said this, the matrons all came round Sanballad, some kissing his hands, some his feet, and others kneeling, and in the highest acts of devotion, touching the skirts of his clothing.

Thus surrounded, the fictitious Dervise passed to the farther end of the passage, where a spacious portal opened into a gloomy temple, hewn out of a solid rock of adamant: in the centre of this temple was an altar, or hearth raised from the ground, on which a large fire, fed with oils and aromatic woods, burnt incessantly day and night; and was renewed with all the incense and perfumes, which Alfouran had obtained from the deluded inhabitants of Bassora.

As soon as Sanballad had advanced to the fire, the orgies began. The female votaries worked themselves up into the most frantic fits of enthusiastic madness, groaning, weeping, lashing themselves, falling into trances, and fits; till at length, tired and fatigued with their wild religion, they sunk into slumbers around the flame which they had adored.

'Now, Sanballad,' said Mamlouk, 'now must thou be resolute and brave: canst thou resist temptation?'

'Alas!' replied Sanballad, 'I thought so once; but it was a vain opinion, arising from the pride of a false religion.'

'Your diffidence,' answered the Genius, 'is prudent, and manifests an humble mind: but, as temptation may be too severe for your new born faith in the Prophet, he has permitted me to personate Alfouran, and carry you invisibly through these mazes of bewitching error.'

Thus saying, Mamlouk put on the appearance of Alfouran; and Sanballad, having wished himself invisible, stood beside the metamorphosed Genius.

Mamlouk then waved his hands on high, and clapped them together in the air: at the sound of his clapping, the matrons awoke, and the fictitious Alfouran commanded the cup of love to be produced. Four ancient matrons immediately brought forward a large bowl from the innermost parts of the temples, of which the transformed Genius and his females partook.

No sooner were they replete with this liquor, than they began to sing the most indecent songs, and by every gesture manifested the desires of their hearts; till at length, being worked into a passionate madness, they threw off their clothing, and discovered, under the formal appearances of sanctified matrons, the most abandoned signs of youthful prostitution.

The Genius, having revealed thus much of the mysteries of Alfouran, took Sanballad by the hand, and led him out of that scene of horror to the top of the mountain. As they arose from the cavern, the beams of the sun began to play upon the east, and tinge the dusky clouds with its early light.

'And who,' said Sanballad to his guide, as they arose, 'who are these abominable wretches?'

'They are,' replied Mamlouk, 'weak and deluded women, who have, at different times, stolen in the dead of night from Bassora, to hear the doctrines of the sanctified Alfouran. But be silent, for I see on the plains before the city of Bassora, the multitudes approaching to hear and adore the hypocritical Dervise.'

'And will Alfouran awake and instruct them?' said Sanballad to the Genius.

'No,' answered Mamlouk, 'the Prophet will not longer permit his villanies to remain unexposed.—But let us hasten to meet the credulous followers of Alfouran.'

Having thus said, Mamlouk descended from the hill, and stood before the cell of the Dervise. The crowds gathered round him, for he still personated the form of Alfouran: some blessed him with tears in their eyes, others nearly worshipped the fictitious idol of their affections.

In the midst of this ill-placed adoration, Mamlouk lifted up his voice, as though it had been the voice of a whirlwind, and said, in the ears of all the inhabitants of Bassora,—'O deluded idolators, why have ye left the worship of your Prophet, to follow the lies of the enchanter Alfouran?'

As the Genius spoke these words, he shook off the appearance of the Dervise, and shone before them in all the native beauty of his heavenly race.

The multitude were astonished at the change, and the Genius proceeded:—'I am Mamlouk, the guardian Genius of your city, which I have with sorrow of late beheld strangely deviating from the worship of the Prophet. The Fates decreed that you shuld be tempted by Alfouran: he came, therefore, into this grove; and, under the specious mask of sanctity, gained the hearts of your people, insomuch that you neglected the public works of the city, and the social duties which ye owed one to another, and all herded to hear and offer to Alfouran yourselves and your substance. Alfouran was possessed of the signet of the Genius Nadoc, by means of which he has commanded the slaves of that signet to form, in the spacious womb of this mountain, the secret haunts of his wickedness and lust; which I will now disclose unto you'—

Having so spoken, the Genius commanded Sanballad to go into the cell and awaken Alfouran; which he did; the Dervise trembled as he came forth, from a consciousness of his guilt.

As soon as the multitude beheld Alfouran, they were so infatuated at his presence, that the luminous appearance of the

Genius scarcely withheld them from worshipping and adoring the Dervise; which when Mamlouk perceived, he said unto them:—'O inhabitants of Bassora, how vain are my labours to bring ye to Mahomet! But, ere ye too foolishly refuse to hear the directions of your Prophet, let me expose to your view the entrails of this mountain.'

As he spake these words, the people all looked towards the mountain; which began to crack and open its sides, till by degrees the temple and caverns within were made manifest to the wondering populace.

Out of this nest of lust and intemperance, came the wild females who had so miserably degraded themselves by their lascivious deeds: but how was the misery of their condition heightened, when they beheld such crowds of their neighbors and kinsmen standing as witnesses of their indecent appearance!

Nor were the men of Bassora less disguested, to find, among the private hordes of the lustful Dervise, their wives and their daughters, who had been thus polluted by his secret iniquities.

They were now all resolute in destroying the monster Alfouran from the face of the earth; and so incensed were they against him, that they tore the saint into ten thousand reliques: and he was most happy who could show most marks of his vengeance on the salacious Dervise.

Mamlouk, having suffered them to execute their vengeance on the hypocritical Alfouran, exhorted them to follow obediently the law of their Prophet, and ever to despise such teachers as should preach up a mysterious, unintelligible, and hidden religion; or expect that they should blindly give up their substance and social duties, to follow the directions of a sanctified and lustful drone.

As Mamlouk finished his tale, bright flashes of light streamed through the lattice-work of the saloon; and presently, with smiles of mildness on his face, came the illustrious Prophet Mahomet, and hovered over the august assembly.

'Thanks, heavenly Mamlouk,' said the Prophet of the faithful: 'thanks do I give thee, in the name of my flock of Bassora, whom thou hast rescued: O, may they never again stray from the light vouchsafed them: but may reason and revelation alike direct them to seek the realms of peace, and fly from the delusions of error and enthusiasm!—And do ye, favored flock of Heaven, listen and imbibe the instructions of my servants, and obey the voice of their divine morality.'

As he thus spake, the royal company all arose, and, prostrating themselves on earth, thus began their hymn of praise:—

'Glories surround the Defender of the faithful! Alla! Alla! Alla!

'Praise and honour, and worship, be unto Him who giveth sight to the blind, and peace to the sons of care! Alla!

'Be thy reign immortal, Prophet of the just! Be thy power, as is thy mercy, Vicegerent of Alla! Alla! Alla! Alla!

'Happy are thy servants who do the will of their Master! Alla!

'Happy are thy servants who hear the voice of their Prophet! Alla!

'Happy are they who walk not in error, but are instructed in thy law! Alla! Alla! Alla!'

As the Genii pronounced these words in the songs of melody, the Prophet arose, and ascended from their sight; while the whole assembly lay entranced with delightful visions.

After some time, the company being reinstated, Iracagem thus addressed himself to the Genius Omphram:—

'Omphram, let the praises of Mahomet inspire thee in declaring the labours of thy tutelage.'

'Happy shall I esteem myself,' answered Omphram, 'if Iracagem approves of my behaviour in directing the Sultan Hassan Assar.'

HASSAN ASSAR; OR, THE HISTORY OF THE CALIPH OF BAGDAT.

The royal court of the Caliph Hassan Assar beheld with discontent a long series of gloomy moons. The voice of joy, and the smiles of festivity, were banished the palace, by the severe frowns which sat, uninterrupted on the brow of the Caliph. The barrenness of his spacious seraglio was the cause of his melancholy; neither the youthful beauties of Circassia, nor the more ripened fruit which his own warmer sun produced, were capable of continuing the race of Caliphs of Bagdat.

Omphram, the tutelary Genius of his kingdom, saw the perverse will of fate, and could not withstand its decrees; she read in the permanent leaves of that everlasting book, that Hassan Assar would vainly solicit a progeny from Heaven, while he sought after that blessing in the embraces of beauty. Though the day, which as yet had not arisen, was enveloped in the clouds of obscurity, she could still discern the possibility of the continuance of the race of Hassan; but not the particular manner in which it was to come to pass.

As Hassan was administering justice in the divan, the throne whereon he sat was violently shaken with the trembling of the earth, the doors of the divan creaked, the lightning poured down through the windows in sheets of fire; and in the midst of the confusion both of earth and air, came Omphram, riding in the tempest which her power had raised. Hassan bowed at her approach; and, as his heart was unconscious of evil, he regarded not the terrors which surrounded her.

'Hassan,' said the Genius, 'I perceive you are not to be biassed by the outward appearance of things: knowing that you are only accountable for the actions of your subjects, you look with serenity on this confusion of elements, which it was not in your power to prevent. The same trust which enables you to be thankful in the sunshine of affluence, gives you also confidence in the dangerous tempest. Look but as indifferently on all things, and your prayers shall be no longer offered to the unconsenting Prophet. He has heard your petition; he believes you are solely desirous of perpetuating his seed; and therefore he commands you to dismiss the beauties of your seraglio, and to give up your whole life and pleasure to the Houri he has provided for your embrace.'

As she finished this declaration, the walls of the palace crumbled into their original clay ; the crowds that were gathered in the divan vanished from the sight of the Caliph ; and he saw no longer the flourishing city of Bagdat, but the wild and fanciful productions of unassisted nature.

The lions in the chariot of Omphram roared to the repeated echoes of the forest ; and the fairy, still observing courageous Hassan unchanged at his fate, smiled on the Caliph, and bade him persevere in his unshaken trust, and no dangers nor misfortunes should prevent the blessings which the Prophet had engaged to shower upon his race.

Although the prospects around him were wild, yet they were beautiful and enchanting. Lofty trees at a distance, on one side, formed natural temples to the deities of the place ; on the other, the adjacent mountains were partly covered with evergreen and flowering shrubs, which grew irregularly, as a covering, above the craggy sides of the rocks, except where a torrent from the summit had worn out a hollow bed for its rapid passage and descent. In the vale beneath, a spacious lake divided the ancient groves from the mountainous sides of the prospect ; and on the intermediate banks grew whatever might invite the eye, or please the wandering palate ; fruits unnumbered of every kind, too heavy for the parent stock whereon they grew ; flowers in every varied hue, and every varied tint which the sun could form by the many coloured beams of its all diffusive light.

While Hassan was admiring these luxurious productions of the uncultivated place, he perceived a most beauteous female advancing through the irregular avenues of the spacious grove. 'O blessed Prophet,' cried the enamoured Sultan, as soon as he beheld her, 'what delights hast thou prepared for me in this vale of plenteousness ! surely I am already in thy blissful paradise ! and behold, the Houri, whom thou hast consigned to my arms, is now approaching to meet my embrace!'

As he said this, he sprang forward to join the blooming fair one, whose delicate limbs stood all confessed to view, and displayed, in their ineffable symmetry and delicate purity, the utmost harmony of a beauteous creation. She also, as animated by the same inclination and desires, hastened toward the embrace of the all-admiring Hassan ;—but alas ! ere the happy couple could meet, the envious earth gave a hedious groan, and the ground, parting under their feet, divided them from each other by a dismal chasm.

While the astonished pair stood on different sides of the gulph, viewing the horrid fissure and the dark abyss, wild notes of strange uncouth warlike music were heard from the bottom of the pit; and immediately a flash or vapour of blue flame arose from the cavern, in the midst of which the Caliph discovered an enormous elephant, with a turret on his back.

When the elephant was level with the surface, the earth closed again: and a black, who sat on the elephant's neck, advanced upon his body to the turret; which he touched with a wand in his hand, and immediately the turret flew into a thousand pieces, and discovered a little hut, out of which came a negro woman properly accoutred with the implements of war.

The beauteous lady screamed at the sight: and as Hassan was hastening to her assistance, the black who held a wand in his hand cried out with a voice like thunder:—

'Hassan Assar, forbear!—But it matters not; for Omphram has deceived me, and thou art unworthy of the favour of Mahomet: Omphram assured me that the Caliph of Bagdat was unbiassed by the outward appearance of things: and yet methinks I see you pay a preference to beauty, and neglect to attend on the vigorous Nakin Palata, who is destined for your spouse.'

'What!' cried Hassan, in a maze, 'must I leave this perfect original, to take up with that unnatural lump of blackness!' At these words, Nakin Palata, with great wrath, drew forth an arrow from her quiver, and fixing it in her bow, aimed the fatal shaft at the body of the beautiful nymph.

Hassan saw the malice but could not prevent the blow. The arrow pierced through the snowy heart of the lovely female; and the warm tide of blood and life issued forth at the unfriendly wound. As the distressed Caliph drew the arrow forth, and applied his lips to the place, the black, jumping from the beast, ran to him, and commanded him to discontinue his care, or he would forever lose the protection of Mahomet.

The Caliph looked up in astonishment at hearing the command, and was more than ever surprised to behold the skin falling from the body of the black, under which he discovered the features of Omphram his Genius.

'O Hassan Assar,' said Omphram, 'hast thou not yet learnt, that the delights of this world are not to bias your affection and obedience from the will of Heaven? When you prayed to the Prophet to continue your race on the throne of your forefathers, did you not promise to give up all other blessings, if you might possess that only desire of your heart?—Now, then, what is beauty, when put in competition with her who is to perpetuate the descendants of the Caliph of Bagdat? Wast thou not unhappy when thou hadst every beauty at command? Didst thou not then despise such faint allurements, and beg from Heaven a more substantial blessing? Behold her, then, who is appointed to bless thee; and yet thou fliest from her, and art now returning to those pleasures which thou hast solemnly renounced : but think not the Prophet will suffer such ingratitude ! No ; enjoy the company of thy beauteous Houri ; for, no doubt, your love is so excessive, that you will willingly follow her to the grave.'

Having thus said, she struck the ground with her wand, and immediately a number of slaves arose with stones, and all the materials for building.—'There,' said the fairy to the workmen, 'inclose that dying corpse with a substantial monument. and let us see how long this worldly Caliph's love will fix him on the body of his mistress.'—The slaves obeyed ; and, being Genii of an inferior order, executed their business in less time than a mortal workman could have laid the foundation.

Hassan neither observed their work, nor was solicitious to escape ; but, still pressing with his lips the fatal wound, suffered himself to be inclosed in those walls of death. Before the roof (which was formed of massive stone) was entirely covered, Omphrm called out, and commanded Hassan to withdraw : but the Caliph was deaf, and regardless of every thing but the condition of his dear nymph. Wherefore the Genii completed the work ; and Omphram finding him deaf to her commands, left him immured in the mausoleum, with the dead body of the strangely murdered fair one.

Although the workmen of Omphram had totally immured the Caliph Hassan Assar, yet was there left a grate-work of iron in the middle of the tomb by the Genius's command, through which the light might reflect on the deceased body, and gave the Caliph a full view of the dead beauties which he had preferred to the will of his Prophet.

For several days, the love-sick Hassan persisted in his attention to the corpse of his beautiful favourite : but contagious mortality now began to steal away the delicate complexion and graceful hue which formerly adorned the living Houri's limbs : a noisome stench succeeded, and yellow putrid foulness overspread the whole body ; her cheeks sunk, her flesh grew moist with rottenness, and all her frame sent forth the strongest effluvia of corruption and death.

Hassan, whose love and affection were solely supported by lust and passion, having lost the only objects of his desire, began to loathe the wretched situation which he had chosen in preference to submission and obedience.

'And is this,' cried the dejected Caliph, looking on the corrupted mass, 'is this the natural effect of death on beauty ? Is it, then, only owing to the different modifications of matter, that one mass gives us the highest enjoyment, and another the greatest disgust ? Nay, more ; are the joys of this world so fleeting and unsubstantial, that the objects of our pleasure to-day may to-morrow become the objects of our aversion ? O Prophet ! holy Prophet !' contintinued he, 'I now see and acknowledge he justice of thy punishment ; I now can discern between the good that thou didst intend me, and the evil which I have chosen.' At these words he sunk on the ground, overcome with watching, loathing, hunger, and fatigue.

As he lay stretched on the ground, the female negro appeared above the grate.—'O blind, ill-fated Caliph,' said she, 'how long will it be ere thou seest the follies of thy choice ? Wert thou not born to do the will of Heaven ? Wert thou not, by thine own desire, consigned over by that will, to fly from the pleasures of life, and give thyself up to the interest of thy race ? The Prophet doubted the sincerity of thy heart ; he therefore placed thee amidst all the natural luxuries which this world affords ; luxuries far more irresistible than those which art hath made in imitation of them. The love which you professed for that noisome body, say, O Caliph, did it arise from virtue or lust ?—You saw and loved ; but you heard not, neither had you knowledge of the perfections or imperfections of her mind. She came only recommended to you by passion and desire ; I came recommended by the will of your Prophet : but you foolishly conceived his commands grievous and your desires natural and reasonable ; therefore you were left in possession of your wishes, to convince you, that, from disobedience and unlawful pleasure, no other fruits can sprout forth but those of corruption and abhorrence. You are sensible this life is short, precarious, and uncertain ; it is a life of trial, and not of enjoyment ; it is a life in which we must refuse, and not covet the pleasures of the world. Where then is the hardship of obedience, when we are commanded to abstain, in order hereafter to possess ?

'Think not, O Caliph, I speak this of myself ; it is your Prophet directs me ; he sought me out among many in mine own nation ; he snatched me from the arms of one whom I had formerly esteemed for his activity and manly strength.

'"Nakin Palata," said a voice unto me, as I was with the utmost pleasure observing the exercises of my lovely youth, "attend to the commands of Heaven ; and know thou wert born to fulfil its will."—At the same time an invisible power plunged me into the earth, and placed me in the hut and turret which you beheld on the back of the elephant.

'A black who guided the beast, informed me of the cause of my situation.—"You are," said the guide, "selected out of thousands, for your modesty, your humility, and obedience to the Power above, to be mother of a royal race. A great and mighty king shall fill your arms : but then you must never more reflect upon the youth you have left, nor sigh for the enjoyment of your native country." At these words, O Caliph, I sunk with sorrow and disgust : no joys of fortune or riches were, in my esteem, equivalent to the jetty blackness of my beloved Kafrac.

'What then,' said I, 'must I be condemned for ever to lose the sight of Kafrac the idol of my soul?'

'"No," replied my guide, "you shall see him yet once again, to convince you how blind that choice is, which has only outward comeliness and natural abilities for its object."—At these words he took me by the shoulders, and we mounted through the caverns of the earth. The ground opened as we ascended, and presently I was conveyed into the centre of a wood, which, I remembered, was near the habitation of my jetty Kafrac.

'The black, having taken his hand from my shoulder, bade me walk forward to a gloomy part of the wood: I obeyed:—but, O Caliph, judge the emotions of my soul, when I beheld the traitorous Kafrac locked in the arms of my brother's wife! My blood curdled with horror at the sight; and I stood motionless before the adulterous Kafrac.

'My guardian black, perceiving my condition, ran towards me, and again touching my shoulder, the earth opened a second time, and we sunk together on the back of the elephant. "Well," cried my guide, when he had seated me in the turret, "are you now better disposed to obey the will of the Prophet of Mecca?"

'I am,' said I, (still terrified with the dreadful vision,) 'at the disposal of your Prophet, and entirely convinced of my own incapacity to distinguish between real and fictitious goodness.' "Then," replied the guide, "you are capable of executing the will of your Prophet. Here, take these your national accoutrements, (giving me the bow and arrows,) and when you see the Caliph Hassan Assar pursuing sensual pleasure, and preferring the specious appearance of beauty to the command of Mahomet, direct your shaft at the breast of his mistress, and fear not to destroy her; for she is only beautiful in appearance, but is really no more than an earthly phantom sent to convince Hassan Assar of the weakness of his heart, and the folly of his sensual lusts."—Having thus said, we ascended again into the realms of light, and arose just between you and the phantom which you blindly esteemed beyond the great blessings that are designed for you.'

When Nakin Palata had ended her relation, the Caliph prostrated himself on the ground, and, thrice adoring Alla and his illustrious Prophet, he cried out, in the words of Nakin Palata: 'I am at thy disposal, O Prophet.'—As he said this, the skies lowered with thunder, and Omphram his Genius descended.

At her approach, the tomb cracked and divided, and Hassan Assar again prostrated himself on the earth before the Genius of his kingdom.

'Happy, happy, happy Caliph! happy art thou, O Hassan Assar!' cried out Omphram, 'who canst submit to the will of thy Prophet; happy art thou in thy choice, and happy is Nakin Palata in exchanging a barbarous savage for a wise, prudent, and religious monarch.—Nor shalt thou find, O Hassan Assar,' continued the Genius of Omphram, 'that the commands of Mahomet are grievous or heavy to be borne: for now look at her whom thou hast despised, and examine the features of the once detestable Nakin Palata.'

At her command, the Caliph Arose from the ground: but oh! how was his soul transported, when he beheld the countenance of his bride changed, and Nakin Palata glowing with every charm with which nature could invest her.

'Ah, Caliph!' continued Omphram, 'be not too much transported by the outward appearance of things; it is because you love each other, that you seem thus beautifully changed: nor are you less amiable in the eyes of Nakin Palata, than she is in your sight, O Caliph! This shall continue while your love continues: but when you, by caprice, by resolute superiority, or by a vexatious ill-nature, put on the frown of disapprobation, then shall you be divested of this amiable comeliness, and stand like a cruel and insulting tyrant before your trembling bride: and when either her love or her obedience fails, then shall she be again transformed, and wear the disgusting complexion of a tawny negro.'

Having thus said, she took Hassan Assar and his bride into her chariot, which was drawn by two majestic lions; and wafted them in the air to the Caliph's palace at Bagdat.

His subjects, when they heard of his arrival, all flocked to the presence of their royal master, and welcomed, with the warmest affection, his long-wished return. Hassan Assar presented to them his beauteous bride, and declared her the only Sultana of his realms. The court rang with joyous accalmations, and all hailed the amiable Nakin Palata. Omphram declared to them the reasons of the Caliph's choice, and promised in the name of the Prophet, a royal successor. At this assurance, the palace again re-echoed with the voices of his subjects; and nothing was heard in the kingdom but the praises of Hassan Assar, the loving, obedient, and religious Caliph, and Nakin Palata, the joy and consort of the best of princes.

Omphram having ended her tale, the sage Iracagem waved his wand, and commanding the race of the faithful to sit down on the carpets spread under their feet, he ordered a collation worthy of his race to be produced. A number of inferior Genii immediately brought in a service of milk and rice.

'Plain, like their instruction,' said he, 'is the diet of the Faithful; their desires are not after the flesh, but after the immortal food of the mind. As the courser despiseth the pastures over which he engageth in the race, so doth the child of Heaven pass by the pleasures of the sons of earth. To satisfy the mind is the business of our race, and to liken it to the image of its original fountain: feed then, my children,' continued Iracagem, 'the necessary cravings of your earthly frames; but suffer not the clay-moulded case to weigh down the precious jewel it contains.'

The disciples of the Genii having finished their abstemious repast, Hassarack was ordered to recite the tale of Kelaun and Guzzarat.

TALES OF TERROR,

OR THE

MYSTERIES OF MAGIC:

A SELECTION OF

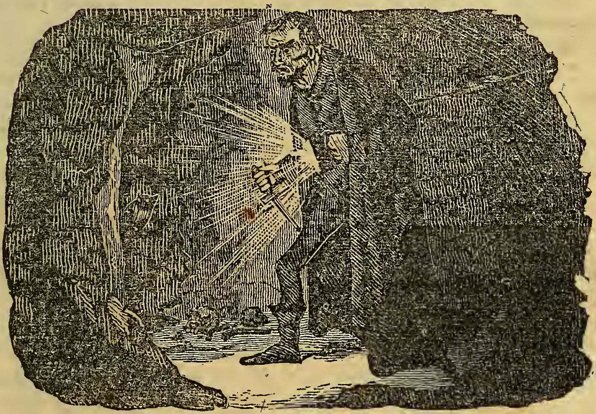
WONDERFUL AND SUPERNATURAL STORIES.

TRANSLATED FROM THE CHINESE, TURKISH, AND GERMAN

COMPILED BY HENRY ST. CLAIR.

TWO VOLUMES IN ONE.

VOL. II.



* * * * * * * * * * "Wither'd Murder,
(Alarm'd by his sentinel the Wolf,
Whose howl 's his watch,) thus with his stealthy pace,
With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards his design,
Moves like a Ghost."—*Shakspeare.*

PHILADELPHIA:
JESPER HARDING.
1848.

THE ASTROLOGER

OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

CIRCLE THE FIRST.

THE NARRATIVES OF CRONHEIM AND HERRMAN, WHICH HAVE NEVER BEFORE BEEN MADE PUBLIC; BEING TRANSLATED FROM A CURIOUS GERMAN WORK, EXPRESSLY FOR THE PRESENT OCCASION.

Blustering winds and chilling rain proclaimed the unwelcome approach of winter; yellow Autumn saw her leafy honors fall to the ground; loud roared the storm across the Elbe, whose ruffled waves curled to the boisterous breath of Æolus. No more the silent grove resounded with the voice of harmony and love. In hollow trees or moss-bemantled walls the feathered songsters sought shelter from the rude unfriendly blast. The raven alone, from some sequestered tower, mixed his hoarse notes with the hoarser cries of the ominous bird of night. Safe in his peaceful cot, the honest husbandman rested from his wonted toils, and, while his well-fed fire defended him from the inclemency of the weather, enjoyed in sweet tranquillity the fruits of his former labor.

After a long-lamented absence of more than thirty years, Herrman had the satisfaction of welcoming his friend Cronheim to his house. Educated together from their infancy, they had early formed a mutual attachment, which gradually ripened into the sincerest friendship, and united their hearts by the most endearing ties,—ties not less binding, not less sacred and invincible, than those of blood.

Great, therefore, was the reluctance with which they parted from each other, after having completed their studies at the University of Gottingen. Herrman engaged himself as private tutor to a nobleman of distinction, with whom he made the tour of Europe; whilst Cronheim, being of a more gay and volatile disposition, sought his fortune in the wars.

The feeling heart alone can picture to itself the mutual pleasure and rapturous delights which our two friends experienced at embracing each other, after an absence of so many years. Time had not yet extinguished the fire of youth and the wonted impetuosity of Cronheim's temper. "Brother," cried he, giving his hand to his friend,—"Brother," let us forget the dull counsels of age; let us, while indulgent fortune still grants me to enjoy your company, live as in the days that are passed; let us live as if the thirty years we have spent separated from each other had never been registered in the iron calendar of Time."

Eagerly did Herrman assent to this proposal of his friend. His estate lay on the pleasant banks of the Elbe, and was, for situation, unrivalled. Woods, meadows, brooks, warrens, hills, and dales, relieving each other, incessantly diversified the scene; Nature had thown the whole into such agreeable confusion and disorder, that it required very little improvement to render his abode the most delightful, picturesque, and romantic spot that can possibly be conceived.

Cronheim, who, for hunting, was a second Nimrod, had here the fairest opportunity of gratifying his favourite passion; nor was Herrman a whit behind him in his pursuits. Pleasing was it to behold the youthful ardor with which our sturdy veterans, at peep of dawn, would bound over hill and dale, to chase the flying stag, or bristly bear.

Already had a week elapsed in these delightful, health-bestowing exercises: every morning was devoted to the chase; and when, spent and languid, they returned from the pleasing sport, a rural repast and good old Rhenish wine refreshed their weary limbs; nor was the bottle or the pipe laid aside till Evening long had spread her sable mantle over the globe, and steeped their eyelids in the dews of sleep.

But now a change of weather put a stop to their sports. Loud, as we have already observed, loud roared the bleak tempestuous storm; the rattling hailstones beat violently against the windows, threatening destruction to these brittle channels of light. Herrman and Cronheim saw themselves obliged to relinquish the chase: in pleasing conversation they endeavored to beguile the tedious hours, whilst they recapitulated the deeds of former times, and rehearsed the past adventures of youth. Evening approached, and found them still indulging the talkative disposition of age.

Louder and louder roared the storm, fierce and more wild raged the conflicting elements; Herrman, with lavish hand, heaped fresh logs upon his friendly fire, and, pushing round the mirth-inspiring glass—

"Whilst angry elements do quarrel,
Be their's, he cried, the bustle,—our's, the barrel."

Pleased with the cheerful humor of his friend Cronheim recruited his pipe, and, after a short pause,—"Brother," he began, "hast thou any faith in supernatural agency? dost thou believe in ghosts?"

Herrman replied only with a negative shake of his head.

"Neither am I a perfect believer in such strange appearances," resumed Cronheim; "and yet, during my travels through a certain part of Germany, it was my fate to experience a strange mysterious series of adventures, which I have never been able to explain to my entire satisfaction."

This address excited Herrman's most serious attention; his curiosity was raised to the highest pitch. Cronheim did not long hold him in suspense, but began his narrative, to the following effect:—

My arrival at Francfort happened to be jnst at the commencement of the fair. The bustle of the place, the incredible concourse of people from every part of Europe, the ceaseless and diversified round of shows, entertainments, and every possible sort of pleasure and pastime, seemed to promise that my time would not easily hang heavy upon my hands; for which reason I determined to pass a few weeks in that place.

The inn in which I lodged, being one of the first in the town, was crowded with strangers in every part; among whom an elderly gentleman distinguished himself, and attracted universal notice, by the singularity of his dress, the bluntness of his manners, and a kind of *mystical* reserve in all his actions. His appearance commanded respect: no bramin could exceed him in gravity of countenance; no quaker in plainness of apparel. He occupied the best apartments in the inn, was attended by his own servants, took no notice of, much less entered into conversation with, any of his fellow lodgers, went out regularly every day after dinner, and seldom returned home till midnight. Though he frequented all public places of resort, he was never once seen to associate with a single individual, but walked up and down, solitary and pensive, like a man burdened with a heavy load upon his spirits, and distracted with care.

The extraordinary character of this stranger excited a desire to be better acquainted with him: for this purpose I began my inquiries with the landlord; but who, shrugging up his shoulders, answered me only with a significant shake of his head. My next application was to the waiters; but they likewise shrugged up their shoulders, and were as ignorant as the landlord. In short, I found it impossible to procure the smallest intelligence concerning the stranger. No one seemed to know any thing about him.

I had not been a week in Francfort before I had the misfortune to lose my purse. This loss I attributed to my carelessness; and, not doubting but some of the professors of legerdemain had been dexterous enough to lighten my pocket, either as I entered or came out of a booth where wild beasts were exhibited, I prudently determined to be more cautious and circumspect in future.

Next morning, however, in spite of all my care, I perceived a new loss which gave me infinitely more concern than I had experienced for my purse. The miniature picture of my Eliza, which I wore suspended by a riband round my neck, and never took of, except when I undressed for bed, was nowhere to be found. I therefore took the waiters pretty sharply to task: these, however, not only disclaimed all knowledge of the picture, but manifested, at the same time, no small displeasure a the injustice of my suspicions.

In hopes of dissipating my chagrin, I went in the evening to the theatre: a handsome female, at a distant part of the house, caught my eye; I put my hand into my pocket, and began to feel for my opera-glass, rummaging first one pocket, then the other; but all to no purpose,—the opera-glass was fairly gone. "Well," thought I, "this is very extraordinary! and with that began to congratulate myself that contrary to my usual practice, I had left my pocket-book at home."

A boy with a link lighted me to a neighboring tavern, after the conclusion of the performance. At the door, I gave my conductor the usual gratuity; and, putting my hand at the same time, instinctively, to my fob, discovered that my watch was missing!

In a fit of rage, I swore not to spend another night in Francfort, being firmly persuaded that I had been singled out as their mark by some of the light-fingered gentry; who actuated by the same principle as other taders—"the sacred thirst of gain,"—are equally punctual in their attendance at fairs, and every other opportunity of making money. Resolved, therefore, to pack up my things early the next morning, and leave a place where I had experienced nothing but misfortunes, I seated myself in sullen despondency, without taking the least notice of the company around. Already had I finished my supper, and was preparing to depart, when at the very moment that I pushed back my seat,—"Pray, Sir, what o'clock is it?" demanded a neighboring voice. I made no answer to this question, which so unseasonably reminded me of my new loss.

"What o'clock is it, Sir?" interrogated the same voice a second time. "I cannot tell;" I replied with peevish impatience, still advancing towards the door.

"Have you no watch, then?" was the next demand. Vexed at the officious impertinence of the stranger, I turned round to look at him, and oh! heavens! what was my surprise at beholding, in the person of my inquirer, no other than my fellow lodger in the inn,—the elderly unsociable gentleman, whose character had before so much excited my curiosity.

The serious look with which he regarded me sufficiently indicated that he expected an answer to his question.

"My watch," I began—

"Has been stolen from you," interrupted the stranger; "however, give yourself no uneasiness. I have been fortunate enough to discover the thief. Here, Sir, is your watch, and take better care of it in future."

I stood for some time mute with astonishment. The same hands which purloined my watch had I made no doubt, exercised their ingenuity on the other articles I had lately lost. This rendered me extremely anxious to know the offender, but, before I was sufficiently recovered from my surprise to commence my inquiries, the stranger had left the room.

I immediately hurried back to the inn: the stranger did not return till midnight. The moment I heard his footsteps on the stairs, I flew to meet him; and, making a low bow, began to thank him for the recovery of my watch. But the unsociable gentleman, without deigning to take the least notice of my discourse, passed abruptly by me, and, entering his own apartment, locked the door after him.

All subsequent attempts to enter into conversation with the wonderful stranger proved equally abortive. In the inn, he constantly kept himself locked in his own apartment, and, in places of public resort, seemed assiduously to avoid me. Three days passed in fruitless endeavours; at length, provoked with the old gentleman's unaccountable reserve, I determined to give myself no further trouble about him, but, packing up my portmanteau, fixed upon the following day for my departure, although I had met with no loss or disaster since the recovery of my watch.

Previous to my leaving Holstein, I had been supplied by my uncle, Mr. Vander Laer, of Hamburg, with bills for a considerable amount, drawn upon a certain house in Leipzig, with which my uncle transacted business. Being low in cash, I resolved to get these bills negotiated in Francfort, and therefore set out, immediately after breakfast, in quest of a merchant to whom I had been recommended for that purpose. I met with little difficulty in finding out the house, but had so much the more in finding my pocket-book, which, after feeling for it first in the right pocket, then in the left, then in the right again, and so on alternately for a full half hour, was actually missing.

"I certainly must have left it at home!" cried I: and, posting back to the inn, unpacked my trunk, and emptied its contents a dozen times at least; but all to no purpose,—pocket-book and notes were irrecoverably lost.

How I passed the remainder of the day after this discovery, I shall not attempt to describe. Evening approached, and found me still busy in rummaging every hole and corner in quest of my pocket-book, which, however, was not forthcoming. The greatness of my loss hardly suffered me to be convinced of its reality; after one of the most uneasy nights that can possibly be conceived, I renewed the search next morning, but with no better success than before.

A stranger in a foreign land, without money, without friends, I now beheld myself the slave of necessity; and, with my eyes fixed sullenly upon the ground, stood wringing my hands, and calling down curses upon myself, and the unknown author o my calamity, when I was roused from my painful reflections by a sudden knock at the door. "Walk in," I cried with peevish impatience: the door flew open, and who should make his appearance but my fellow lodger, the strange unsociable gentleman!

"Young man," (presenting a bill to me) here is sufficient to carry you home to your friends; the post sets out to-morrow morning. I wish you a pleasant journey: farewell!"

In an instant the draft lay upon the table, and away hurried the donor, before I had time to recover from my surprise, or to utter a single syllable. Astonishment long held me, as it were, chained to my seat; but curiosity to be acquainted with the nature of the stranger's bounty, getting at length, the better of my amazement, I proceeded to examine the paper, which I found to be a bill for one hundred and twenty dollars, drawn upon a merchant in Francfort, and payable at sight.

If I was before confounded and surprised, I was now not less vexed and chagrined at this adventure, in consequence of which I saw myself debtor to the generosity of a stranger, whom nobody seemed to know, whose very name and place of abode I had in vain attempted to discover: what probability, therfore, had I of ever acquitting myself of my obligations by making restitution? "I must and will learn his address" was my final determination; accordingly, I repaired to the stranger's apartment, knocked at the door, but, to my great disapointment, found him not at home. In hopes of dissipating my uneasiness, I likewise resolved upon a walk, and hurried to join the busy scenes of tumult and confusion which the fair exhibited.

It was late when I returned to the inn. The stranger had not arrived: his usual hour was midnight; I therefore proposed to wait his return, and either to insist on knowing his address, or else compel him to take his present back again. For this purpose, leaving my door ajar I seated myself on a sofa, and endeavored to beguile the tedious hours of expectation by reading a German translation of Ossian.

Midnight approached without any signs of the stranger's return. I still continued streched upon the sofa; at length I grew drowsy, Ossian droped out of my hands, my eye-lids closed involuntarily, and, overpowered by sleep, I already nodded when I was suddenly roused by a noise at the door of my room. I started up—all was silent. I opened the door—could hear nothing. It certainly must have been imagination—I must have fancied or dreamed that I heard a noise. Resuming, therefore, my book, I rubbed my eyes, wiped them with a wet cloth, and, that I might be in less danger of giving way to slumber, began to read aloud: "Does the wind touch thee, O harp, or is it some passing ghost?"

Hardly had I pronounced the last words, when the noise returned. I could plainly distinguish the tread of human feet along the passage: the noise drew nearer and nearer. Presently I believed I heard a trembling hand groping for the lock of the door, which, opening gradually, discovered a female dressed in white, with a veil over her face, that reached half way down her shoulders.

Slow and solemn, with her back turned to me, she drew near the table, took my watch, examined it attentively, sighed thrice and deeply, replaced my watch upon the table, and continued her walk to the opposite corner of the room. In repassing, she rested her head upon her left hand, and, drawing her veil aside with her right hand, I beheld, with horror and astonishment, the very features of Eliza; but her countenance pale, her eyes sunk and hollow, and her brow contracted with indignation.

After a short pause, she drew nearer, cast an angry look at me, held up her hand in a threatening attitude, and, thrice beating her breast, whilst heart-piercing groans burst from her bosom, regained the door, and disappeared.

On recovering from my surprise, I found myself still seated upon the sofa, and, revolving in my mind every concomitant circumstance of this extraordinary apparition, was firmly persuaded that the whole adventure could be nothing but a dream. I looked at my watch—it was exactly one o'clock. Impatient at the stranger's delay, I threw myself, dressed as I was, upon the bed, and slept till late in the morning. My first care, upon awaking, was to inquire of the waiter whether the strange gentleman had returned to the inn during the last night. I was answered in the negative. "Has he left Francfort?—Did he make any mention of travelling?"

"To have given any notice to us of his intended journey," replied the waiter, "would be contrary to the mysterious reserve of his character; it is, however, probable enough that he is gone His reckoning he settles regularly every day after dinner; and, as to trunks or baggage, he never carries any thing of the kind along with him."

"Suppose we step to his apartment; I am curious to satisfy myself whether he be actually gone or not"

The key stood in the door; but, excepting the usual furniture of the room, not the smallest trace was there of any person having lodged in it.

This was to me a very unwelcome discovery. What hope could I now have of ever being able to acquit myself of my obligations to my unknown benefactor? More than once I felt tempted to destroy the bill for which I stood indebted to his bounty; but this, as I justly reflected, could in no shape cancel or lessen my obligation. Suddenly the thought shot across my mind, that perhaps the bill might be of no value; it might be fictitious,—might be drawn upon a person who was no where to be found. Though this supposition, in case it should prove true, threatened to involve me in my former embarrassment, I took a strange delight in cherishing the idea, and, that I might but an end to my suspense, showed the note to my landlord under pretence of inquiring after the merchant on whom it was drawn. The innkeeper instantly described the street and house, offering to send his boy with me to show me the way: this, however, I thought proper to decline.

I went therefore alone, and tendered my bill for payment the same morning. The merchant ran over the draft, and then fixed his eyes with uncommon significance upon me. His looks seemed expressive of something more than mere astonishment. This I considered as a confirmation of my suspicions, and expected every moment to hear the validity of my bill called in question. I found myself, however, mistaken; the merchant, still eyeing me with the same significant attention, opened his desk, and counted me the money. This seemed a favorable opportunity to obtain some intelligence concerning the stranger from whom I had received the note; I ventured, therefore to question the merchant about the drawer of the bill. Evidently disconcerted at this demand, the merchant shrugged his shoulders, and, without making any reply, locked his desk and departed! I found his conduct strangely mysterious: a confused train of ideas rushed upon my mind; a walk seemed best calculated to drive away the vapors; I repaired, therefore, to a neighbors tea-garden.

The beauty of the weather had enticed a large concourse of people to the place. I took my seat in a pleasant arbor, where woodbine and whitethorn interwove their friendly branches, and, calling for chocolate, began, while this was preparing, to give free scope to my meditations, and to ruminate on the strange occurrences I had witnessed during my short abode at Francfort. Above all, my dream engrossed my most serious thoughts; the more I reflected upon every particular, the more extraordinary I found it. Eliza's look, her wrathful countenance, the threatening manner in which she held up her hand

—and but too well I knew how justly I deserved her anger—all appeared so natural, so suited to my present circumstances, that sometimes I felt inclined to consider last night's adventure as more than a mere dream. But against this opinion reason and incredulity raised a thousand unanswerable objections. I endeavored to banish the whole idea from my mind; in vain,—my dream returned, revolted, recoiled upon my imagination; opposition only served to give it additional force. Painful was the struggle between contending sentiments; I could support the conflict no longer: forgetful of the company, I broke out into a loud exclamation—"Yes! it must have been a dream." "'Twas no dream," rejoined a voice, familiar to my ear. Astonished and confounded, I lifted up my eyes; the strange gentleman, my unknown friend and benefactor, stood before me.

"Young man," he continued, "if you wish to be satisfied relative to what you saw last night, meet me at ten o'clock this evening, at the corner of Frederic Street, facing the Dolphin." Without waiting my reply, the stranger hurried out of the arbor, and in an instant lost himself among the crowd.

Soon after, the waiter made his appearance with the chocolate, but my appetite was gone. I traversed the garden, wandered up and down its walks, searched every where for the wonderful stranger, inquired after him of the waiters, described him, characterized him, offered a reward to any one that should discover him, but all to no purpose; none of the waiters had seen any person that answered his description.

Chagrined at the ill success of my inquiries, I returned to the inn, and, with a kind of secret horror, entered my apartment, where the image of Eliza seemed still to hover round me. Painful conjectures tortured my mind: her pallid countenance, hollow eyes, and the signs of mortality portrayed in her looks, filled me with the most gloomy apprehensions. The place became insupportable: restless and uneasy, I wandered from one scene of bustling impertinence to another; from the inn to the coffee-house, from the coffee-house to the mall, from the mall to the exhibition-room, from the exhibition-room to the fair, to the booths, to puppet-shows, merry Andrews, wild beasts, &c.—Nothing could restore me to tranquillity—nothing afford me relief—nothing calm the tempest of my thoughts

With the approach of evening, my assignation with the wonderful incognito engrossed my meditations. Strange ideas, unaccountable forebodings, harrassed my mind. The time, the place of meeting, seemed equally mysterious and alarming. "Why not fix upon an early hour?" Why not upon his own apartment at the inn? Go I, or go I not?" I incessantly put the question to myself, while my wavering resolution, like a pair of scales, preponderated this way, then that, alternately.

"What risk, what danger, mayest thou expose thyself to by going?" demanded Prudence. "What discoveries mayest thou make?" replied Curiosity: "to-morrow is the day appointed for thy departure from Francfort, and this very night an opportunity offers of obtaining light, and satisfactory information, concerning all the strange and intricate occurrences which have lately taken place. How wilt thou repent having neglected so favorable an opportunity? And of whom standest thou in dread? Shame upon thy manhood, to tremble at an old grey-headed gentleman." "A gentleman to whom thou art, moreover, under obligations," added Pride, "which this very evening thou mayest learn to acquit thyself of."—Yes, I go, was the conclusion of my deliberations.

It was now within half an hour of ten o'clock. I returned to the inn to prepare for my intended expeditions. The landlord meeting me at the door, accosted me with more than usual gaiety.

" Sir," he began," I have an agreeable piece of news to communicate, that will, I make no doubt, afford you equal pleasure and surprise."

"What is it?" I demanded with astonishment.

"During your abode in my house, you have had the misfortune to lose, at different times, sundry valuable articles."

"That, indeed, is but too true," I replied, with a look that seemed to ask, whether this was the pleasant and surprising news my landlord had announced.

" These losses," continued the innkeeper, " have been productive of much trouble and uneasiness to me, as well as to yourself, Sir. For the credit of an inn, you know, Sir"—

" To the point, if you please," I interrupted him, being impatient to be gone.

" It seems, Sir, you lost your purse, the miniature picture of a young lady, an opera-glass, and likewise your pocket-book."

"Your inventory of my loss is very exact, very accurate, indeed!"

"All these articles," resumed the innkeeper, " you will find faithfully restored; they lie this present moment upon the table in your apartment."

"Explain yourself!" I exclaimed, trifle with my impatience no longer."

"The matter is even as I relate. It is hardly an hour ago since a stranger brought these things to my house."

"A stranger, do you say? He can be no stranger to you, I should suppose?"

"Who, then, do you imagine it to be, Sir?" demanded the innkeeper.

"Who else," I replied, "but the elderly gentleman, your former lodger?"

The innkeeper shook his head; at the same instant he was called off to some company. I hurried up stairs; every thing corresponded with the landlord's relation. On the table lay my purse, the miniature-picture, opera-glass, and pocket-book; I examined the latter, and found my notes safe and untouched. I stood petrified with amazement.

That this was a fresh obligation conferred upon me by my unknown benefactor I had little room to doubt. "But how," thought I; "by what means can he have been enabled to effect this restoration? Why anticipate, as it were, his own appointed time of meeting? Can he have entertained any doubt of my punctuality in attending his assignation? or has he, perhaps, been compelled, by unavoidable, unforeseen necessity, to accelerate his departure from Francfort?" The latter conjecture, whilst it appeared the most unpleasant, since it deprived me of all possibility of repairing the sum for which I stood indebted to the stranger's bounty, at the very time when the recovery of my own notes put this restitution in my power. However, as the stranger's departure was not positively certain; as the whole of his character and conduct had been in the highest degree mysterious; as his disinterested benevolence, inflexible integrity, and unexampled philanthropy, rendered it improbable that he should fail in his promise of meeting me, without the most cogent reasons, I determined to repair to the appointed place of rendezvous.

"Did the bearer of the lost articles, which I have thus unexpectedly regained, leave no message relative to the author, the place, the manner of their recovery?" addressing myself to the innkeeper, in my way to the door.

"None in the world," replied the innkeeper; "He said neither more nor less than what I have already told you. "Here are the things which M. Cronheim has lost during his abode in your house;" and, without giving me a moment's time to question him further on the subject, laid them down upon the table, and departed."

"Take care of this till my return," said I, delivering the key of my apartment to the landlord: my effects I have regained; for the future I leave them in your custody,—from you I shall expect them." The time of assignation drew near: I hurried away from the inn.

The clock struck ten: I kept my post at the corner of Frederic Street. Dark was the night; loud and hollow roared the wind; not a star shone in the firmament; every distant sound, every approaching footstep, announced to my fond imagination the arrival of my unknown benefactor. I ran to meet the coming passenger, accosted every one that fell in my way, but found myself continually mistaken. Repeated disappointments served to confirm me in the opinion which I had already formed on recovering my pocket-book, with the other articles of my loss, as above related. My generous friend, thought I, must have left Francfort,—must have been under a sudden indispensable necessity of travelling. I grew tired of waiting—the sound of the church-clock again saluted my ears ; it was eleven, and the stranger had not yet made his appearance. Passengers were no longer heard at a distance ; midnight, silence, impenetrable darkness, surrounded me ; vexed and discontented, I set out on my return to the inn.

Hardly, however, had I advanced ten paces, before I fancied I heard some one endeavoring to overtake me. "Stop, Sir," exclaimed the well-known voice of my long-expected friend. I instantly turned round, and ran to meet him.

"Sorry am I," began the courteous stranger, "to have detained you so long."

" Longer, Sir, would I have waited with pleasure, had I been certain of meeting you ; had I not been apprehensive that you had left Francfort. I burn with impatience to see myself extricated from my doubts : to obtain your promised explanation relative to the mysterious adventures I have lately experienced.

"That explanation you shall soon receive," was the stranger's reply: " follow me."

With long and hasty strides he now began to lead the way, displaying more activity than could have been expected from his years.

I followed him ; not a single word passed between us We soon approached the city gates: these were in an instant thrown open by the guard, and now our way led across the suburbs.

At the extremity stood a lonely antiquated house or castle, surrounded with a high wall, and apparently in a very ruinous condition. The stranger stopped short ; three times he struck with his staff against the massy gates: hollow sounded his knocks through the solitary apartments. An old grey-headed porter gave us admittance. The stranger demanded a light ; a lantern was brought: in mysterious silence he traversed the rooms, where desolation seemed to have taken up her abode ; all was waste, empty, uninhabited ; the old grey-headed porter excepted, I saw no signs of a single living animal. After passing through a long narrow passage, we came into a spacious garden, if a place overgrown with briers and thorns may deserve that title. Here, however, the former picture of silent, solitary desolation was quite reversed: bats and owls swarmed in every part, and filled the air with their doleful, lamentable cries. A ruinous antique summer-house, built of flint and granite, stood at the bottom; thither I followed my conductor.

"Time and place," began the latter, carefully re-locking the door the moment I had entered,—"time and place are here equally favorable for our purpose: explain the nature of your doubts, and those intricate events concerning which you desire better information."

I began with a brief relation of the extraordinary manner in which my pocket-book, notes, &c. had been restored to me, and was just proceeding to inquire whether my conductor was not the author of this fortunate discovery, when I was interrupted by the latter.

"I am perfectly acquainted with the whole transaction; ask whatever question you please, but let it comprise the sum of all your wishes."

This command involved me in the utmost perplexity. How was it possible for me, in my present state of surprise, to consolidate, to concentrate, as it were, my desires instantaneously into one focus, into one object, one point?

The stranger perceived my embarrassment. "Ask then," he resumed, "who the friend is that interests himself so faithfully in your concerns."

"The very question," I replied, "that I most devoutly wish to have resolved."

"Well, then, you shall soon have an opportunity of seeing this friend—of being personally acquainted with him."

"Soon have an opportunity!" I repeated with astonishment. "Am I not acquainted with him already? Are not you, yourself, Sir, that friend, that generous benefactor?"

"No!" replied the stranger with a negative shake of the head; "I am nothing more than his instrument; and that"—here he paused a moment—"and that only at the third hand."

At these words I regarded him with silent amazement. Of this the stranger seemed to take but little notice, but, drawing from his pocket a small box filled with red sand, began to scatter its contents about the floor; then describing with his wand two circles, he placed me in one, while he occupied the other himself, and, with his hands crossed upon his breast, and his eyes directed upwards, stood for a long time motionless like a statue.

"What," thought I to myself, "will be the end of these mysterious preparations?"

The stranger still continued motionless, till a distant church clock announced the solemn hour of midnight. Hardly had the last stroke ceased to vibrate on our ears, when, suddenly turning himself round in his circle, he pronounced, with an audible voice, at full length, the name of Eliza. I started with horror and astonishment. Instantly was heard a subterraneous noise, like the thunder under ground that forbodes an earthquake, or when it rattles with aggravated peals, re-echoing from the neighboring mountains.

The stranger pronounced the name of Eliza the second time, and with a voice louder and more awful, than before. A flash of lightning shot across the room, which shook with the roaring of the deep-mouthed thunder.

Louder, and still more dreadful, the stranger pronounced the name of Eliza the third time. A sudden trembling siezed upon me—the whole summer-house seemed to be on fire—the ground gave way under my feet—I sunk down—the spirit of Eliza hovered over me—my senses forsook me.

A violent rocking gradually restored me to the use of my faculties. At first I fancied myself tossed to and fro by invisible hands, while a rattling noise invaded my ears. The jolting still increased. Presently, I perceived myself seated in a vehicle that rolled along with surprising velocity. Impenetrable darkness surrounded me—it was impossible for me to distinguish a single object. I found myself terribly confined and straightened for want of room: somebody sat at my right hand, but whether my companion belonged to the spiritual or corporeal race of beings, I was not sufficiently recovered for my surprise to determine.

Meanwhile the carriage rolled along with increasing rapididity, but either the roads must have been extremely rugged and uneven, or my driver, being unaquainted with the country, was unable to select his way in the dark, for we encountered such terrible shocks from loose stones, the roots and broken branches of trees, &c. that I expected, every moment, to see the vehicle overset, and dashed in pieces. How long I continued in this miserable situation it is difficult to ascertain, as you may reasonably suppose that one hour's travelling in this mode might well seem longer than a journey from Leipzig to Dresden in a stage coach. At length a most tremendous shock put a period to our expedition: the charioteer drove fiercely over a prostrate mile-stone—off flew one of the wheels—and down came the carriage in an instant.

"Jesus! Maria!" exclaimed my companion; who, falling right upon me, pressed me with such true, unequivocal, and substantial weight, that, had I been capable of the least reflection, I might soon have satisfied my former doubts, whether my assoicate belonged to the immaterial or corporeal race of beings.

Excruciating torments awakened me from the state of stupefaction in which I had lain several minutes Rough voices repeatedly called for help, and presently a countryman with a lantern, ran to our assistance. On opening my eyes, I perceived two men standing over me each holding a horse apparently just unharnessed from the broken carriage. They attempted to lift me up; my agonies increased—I found myself unable to stand, and entreated them, for God's sake, to let me lie.

A second attempt was made to raise me on my feet: in vain; it appeared that my thigh was broken. No sooner was this discovery made, than the two men swung themselves upon their horses, and promising to procure assistance in the first town or village they should find, galloped off at full speed, leaving me to the care of the peasant, who kindly did all in his power to comfort and encourage me.

The night was piercing cold, which greatly added to the poignancy of my torments. A whole hour elapsed—no help made its appearance—the men with the horses seemed to be in no hurry to return. At length the distant rattling of a carriage was heard: the countryman with his lantern ran to meet it; it proved to be a coach and four.

"Stop, for the love of Christ!" he exclaimed, and briefly related the disaster which had just befallen me. A middle-aged gentleman sprang out, and, with the assistance of the countryman and his own attendants, conveyed me to the carriage, where having seated me as conveniently as circumstances would admit, he gave orders to drive as gently as possible.

Hardly had the morning began to dawn when we entered a populous village on the estate of Baron von Kampenhausen: such was the gentleman's name who afforded me protection in my present calamity. I was immediately conveyed to the manor-house. A servant, dispatched for that purpose, soon returned with a surgeon; the necessary operations were performed, after which I was put to bed. My kind and noble benefactor paid me all possible attention, sat hours together by my bed-side, and as soon as I was sufficiently recovered to enter into conversation, entertained me alternately with his discourse, and reading extracts from the best French and German authors.

At the expiration of nine weeks I was able to lay my crutches aside, and, taking an affectionate leave of Baron von Kampenhausen, return to Francfort. My sudden disappearance from that place had greatly alarmed the landlord of the inn where I lodged; who, having made many fruitless inquiries after me, gave me entirely up for lost. Great, therefore, was his surprise at my unexpected return, after so long an absence.

Hardly would he credit his own eyes, when I first made my appearance, but, crossing himself, and adjuring me in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, began the usual preamble which, from time immemorial, has been deemed an infallible charm against hobgoblins of every description. However, after I had with some difficulty satisfied him that it was no apparition, but a *bond fide* flesh-and-bone inhabitant of this terraqueous globe, I received my effects at his hand, and, the day following, set out from Francfort, on my way to Switzerland.

Here Cronheim ended his wonderful narrative, and, anxiously fixing his eyes on Herrman, seemed at once to wish, and yet dread, to hear the judgment his friend would pass upon it.

After a short pause, "Marvellous," began Herrman, "is the relation I have just heard—marvellous to such a degree, that had I not myself experienced adventures of a similar, or even more wonderful nature, and which probably may be more intimately connected with your own history than you would at first imagine, I must candidly acknowledge I should be apt to call the authenticity of your narrative into question."

Cronheim, who fully expected to find, not only a severe critic, but an incredulous hearer, in the person of his friend, was all impatience to be made acquainted with the wonders which Herrman had announced; but the latter, observing that the night was already far spent, and that, as he was only a partial actor in the drama, it would be necessary for him to consult some papers in which the history was continued and brought to its catastrophe, begged leave to postpone his relation till the following day, with which demand Cronheim readily acquiesced.

Aurora, with rosy fingers unlocking the chrystal gates of light, ushered in the sprightly morn. Clear and unclouded shone the sky, hushed was the storm, the weather appeared the very reverse of what it had been the preceding day. Cronheim, notwithstanding, manifested no inclination for the chase; but, at breakfast, took occasion to remind his friend of last night's promise, and anxiously inquired whether he had found the papers to which he then alluded.

Herrman replied in the affirmative, and at the same time gave him to understand that, on account of the immoderate length of his history, his design was to relate at present only as far as himself had been an acting person in the drama. The remainder, which formed by far the greatest part of his history, he promised to deliver to him in writing, but not before the time fixed for his departure; lest, he added, ghost and necromancers should so entirely engross their thoughts, as to leave no time for the more rational, solaces of friendship.

Cronheim declared himself satisfied with this proposal, and Herrman, as soon as he had reloaded his pipe, began his promised narative, to the following effect:

Soon after our separation on leaving Gottingen, I engaged myself as private tutor to the young Count von Einsidel, a nobleman not less distinguished by his virtues than by his illustrious descent, with whom I travelled through the greatest part of Europe. Our tour lasted three years, and, though it may be supposed that, in the course of so long a journey, in which, like Ulysses, we had occasion to see—

"Mores hominum multorum et urbes,"*

we could not fail of meeting with many extraordinary adventures: the most wonderful as well as the most dangerous of all seems to have been reserved for our return to Germany from Switzerland.

We had already nearly cleared the Black Forest†, when, on a sudden, the sky became overcast, the rain poured down in torrents, and the vivid flashes of lightning, bursting right over our heads, succeeded one another with such rapidity, that the thunder, re-echoing from the woods, the rocks, and mountains, seemed but one continued peal. To add to our distress, night now began to approach: not such a night as tender lovers choose to wander in by the moon's pale lamp, and breathe their amorous vows—but rather a night, such as poets have conceived, when Lapland witches‡ charm the laboring moon, and bring her down to earth, whilst darkness, with her raven wings outspread, hovering beneath the fair expanse of heaven, forbids the starry host their mild effulgence to diffuse, and cheer the traveller with their silver light.

We had not travelled many miles in this dismal condition, before our postillion had the misfortune to lose his way; and, what still aggravated our calamity, he did not perceive his mistake till it was already too late to rectify it. I shall not attempt to describe the gloomy apprehensions which filled our minds on his communicating to us this unwelcome intelligence. Our postillion was naturally a lad of humor, and, agreeably to the laudable practice of his profession, had entertained us all day with a recital of the numberless murders, robberies, rapes, &c. which had been perpetrated in this immense forest. We had likewise, in many instances, received ocular demonstrations of the truth of his reports from the numberless crosses which in this country are erected on the spot where any murder has been committed, partly with a view to put travellers upon their guard, and partly to entreat their prayers for the rest of the souls of the defunct. Hardly an hour passed without our meeting one or more of these crosses, with the following inscription·

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* Through many kingdoms, many towns he strayed,
And foreign customs, laws, and manners, weighed.

† This immense forest is situated in Swabia, and is by far the largest in all Germany; known to the ancients by the name of Sylva Hercynia. Cæsar gives a description of it in his Commentaries, where he affirms it to be nine days' journey in breadth, and three score in length.

‡ "Thessalae mulieres vel lunam e cœlo *detrahere* profitebantur. Repente enim luna, cum *plena* esset et *sublimis*, facta est *obscura*, lumineque deficiente multiplicius mutatis coloribus *evanuit*."—Unde Virgilius, Eclog. viii.

"Carmina vel cœlo possunt *deducere Lunam*."
Song, mystic song, attracts the laboring Moon.
Confer, et Horatium, Epod. v. et xvii.

NEAR THIS PLACE WAS MURDERED
N. N.
ALL GOOD CHRISTIANS PRAY FOR
HIS SOUL.

As we wished for nothing more ardently than to extricate ourselves from this dismal situation as soon as possible (being not less in purgatory ourselves than the souls of those for whom our prayers were desired), we ordered the postillion to lose no time in fruitless attempts to regain the right road to the town we had originally designed to put up at, but rather to drive straight forward with the utmost expedition, till we should have the good fortune to light on some human habitation, where we might pass the remainder of the night in safety. With this request our Jehu willingly complied, and after exercising his whip for a full hour with all the fury of his illustrious predecessor of that name, we found ourselves emerging from our worse than Cimmerian forest, upon the entrance of a large plain, or common.

"Blessed Virgin-mother of God!" exclaimed the postillion, with a degree of ecstacy not to be conceived, "we are at last in open country, and, if I am not mistaken, my Lord, at no great distance from a village."

The music of the spheres could not have sounded more delightful and harmonious to the count and myself than this intelligence from our postillion: nor was it long before his conjectures were confirmed by a hideous howl which half a score of dogs set up on our nearer approach.

Great was our joy at beholding once more the peaceful abodes of man. The village we found to be of considerable extent, but the inn, if such it may be called, was one of the most execrable that ever I set foot in the whole course of my life. "Benedicite!" exclaimed the landlord, all astonishment at seeing a postchaise draw up before his door,—a phenomenon which caused him to stare as much as if the Grand Turk in person had come to pay him a visit. It was no wonder, therefore, if the fair of the house contained nothing more than a few smoaked sausages, some rusty bacon, and a stale loaf of brown bread

Wine or beer, he assured us, was not to be had in the whole neighborhood; and such was the goodness of his brandy, that even our postillion was glad to wash his mouth after swallowing a glass of it.

I inquired whether the lord of the manor resided on his estate, hoping to meet with better accommodation from the hospitality of a stranger; but received for answer, that the manor-house was entirely waste and uninhabited, nobody having been able to live in it for this century past, and upwards: I demanded the reason.

"Why, as to the matter of that, look ye, gentlemen," replied the land-lord, "it is an affair which nobody much cares to speak about—neither dare I, on any account, give you any item of the buisness to-night; but wait," he added, " till to-morow morning, and then, if you are not able to divine the cause yourselves, why I will even let you into particulars."

As little satisfied with this reply as my self, the count pressed the landlord to be more explicit, and even insisted on having a categorical answer to the question I had put: but our landlord was not to be prevailed upon; he continued shaking his head, as stubborn as a mule, and, when he found that we would not desist from our inquiries, left the room with evident signs of displeasure, grumbling something about unlawful curiosity and divine judgments, with other obscure hints, which to us were quite unintelligible.

Vexed as we were at what we considered a most unpardonable instance of rudeness, we were fain to make the best of our present circumstances, and digest our coarse unsavory fair as we could. Indeed, the black Spartan broth of Leonidas would have been a downright luxury, compared to the miserable entertainment we partook of on this occasion; but experience verified the old proverb, that "hunger is the best sauce."

After we had finished our homely repast, and somewhat appeased the cravings of nature, we laid ourselves down upon some clean fresh straw, which here supplied the place of a bed to our weary limbs. The count was presently buried in a profound sleep; whilst I kept turning from side to side, and, harrassed by a thousand unaccountable apprehensions, found it impossible to close my eyes. In this state of uneasiness I continued till the watchman, with hoarse voice, announced the solemn hour of midnight. My ears were instantaneously alarmed with the distant sound of horses' hoofs, and the echoing thunder of trumpets, horns, and other wind instruments. The noise drew near, and presently a whole troop of horse seemed to pass in full gallop by the window, the air at the same time resounding with such a full band of music, that, had it not been for the unseasonable hour, added to the disagreeableness of the night, I should have imagined his Serene Highness the Elector, with his whole court and retinue, had marched through the place on a royal hunting-party. The count awoke with the noise, and, abruptly starting up—"What can be the meaning of all this?" he demanded, with a mixture of fear and astonishment.

To this question I was as little able to give a satisfactory answer as himself. I continued, therefore, to listen with the greatest attention to what was transacting, and perceived, to my no small surprise, that these nocturnal Nimrods had hardly passed our inn, before the noise of their horses and instruments died away, and the whole place was as silent as before. This appeared to me exceedingly singular. I began afresh to give free scope to the workings of a disturbed imagination, and, comparing in my mind the strange scene I had just witnessed with the unaccountable reserve and dark inuendos of our landlord, I attempted to unravel the mystery that seemed to envelop this adventure. As for the count, he soon relapsed into a profound slumber, and snored away as heartily as ever.

Setting aside the inclemency of the weather, it appeared to me very improbable that any person should ride out on a hunting-party at midnight. This reflection induced me for some time to regard the noise I had heard as the consequence of my having dreamed to that effect: but when I took into serious consideration the behaviour of our landlord, and the sudden awaking of the count, I found myself greatly staggered, and cannot deny but a secret horror invaded my whole frame.

Lost and bewildered in a painful labyrinth of conjecture and doubt, I insensibly grew weary of the strife between contending opinions. A gentle slumber, the welcome forerunner of the somniferous deity, had already closed my eyelids, when I was roused from my lethargy by the hoarse cry of the watchman, who, with the whole collected force of his lungs, gave notice that the clock had just struck one in the morning. His voice, however, though powerful enough to entitle him to be called a second Boanerges, was soon drowned by the return of the same alarming noise I had before heard. I immediately arose, and, hastening to the window, which shook with the echoing thunder of horns, trumpets, &c. resolved to satisfy my curiosity relative to this nocturnal troop of Nimrods by ocular demonstration; but, before I had time to throw the window open, the whole squadron had passed the house in full gallop, with a noise equal to the loudest whirlwind, and a few minutes after the former silence succeeded, and all was quiet as the grave.

I was now fain to banish all further thoughts of sleep, for the present night at least, and, not able to wait till breakfast, at which time the landlord had promised to satisfy our inquiries relative to the uninhabited mansion, I ran to the window the moment I heard the watchman begin to cry two o'clock.

"Friend," I accosted him, "what can be the meaning of the noise and racket that alarmed our ears at the hours of twelve and one?"

"Why, truly," was his answer, "your honor must certainly be a stranger in this neighborhood. There is not a child in the village but knows all about it. We have this noise, as you call it, every night for weeks together: after that, we are quiet again for a season."

"Well, but," I replied, "what whimsical gentleman is it that hunts at midnight?"

"Nay, that, indeed, I am not at liberty to tell you; inquire of your landlord, who can inform you of every particular. For my part, I am only doing my duty, and my trust is in God.—But not a syllable of what I see and hear will I betray to any living soul; nor should a king's ransom tempt me to it." And with that the watchman took himself off.

I wrapped myself up in my great coat, and, drawing a chair to the window, awaited, with anxious impatience, the tardy return of day. At length the morning began to dawn; the whole village re-echoed with the crowing of cocks, which, I may truly say, never sounded more grateful to my ears. The count at the same time awaking, and seeing me already dressed:—

"Why, you are up by times, to-day, Sir," he began, rubbing his eyes. "Pray tell me what noise that was which disturbed us last night?"

"Indeed, my Lord," I replied, "my curiosity in this respect is at least equal to your own; and hardly can I wait till we receive the promised information from our landlord. And," added I, "if your lordship had not slept so soundly, you would have heard the troop gallop past us at one in the morning with the same dreadful impetuosity and noise as they did at twelve."

The sound of horses' hoofs in the yard put a stop to our conversation. I ran to the window, and saw an officer with his servant alight before the inn door. They presently joined us, and having, like ourselves, had the misfortune to be benighted and lose their way, our acquaintance was soon formed. The officer was a spirited young fellow, about three and twenty, wore Danish uniform, and had, it seems, been set upon a recruiting-party. The count related our last night's adventure, which the lieutenant for some time regarded as a mere joke.—But, upon my positive assurance that what he had just heard was a real fact, he testified a strong desire to be better acquainted with the midnight hunters.

"That honor you may easily have," replied the baron; "only pass the night here, and we will bear you company."

"Done!" cried the lieutenant; "I hold you to your word, and who knows but our hunting gentry may be civil enough to admit us of their party. In that case," added he, laughing, "we come in for our share of a haunch of venison."

Hardly had he pronounced these words when the landlord made his appearance—"Well, gentlemen," he began (after previously bidding us good morrow), "did your honors hear any thing extraordinary last night?"

"But too much!" was my reply; however, pray inform me who, and what kind of hunters, they are that seem so fond of exercising their sport at midnight?"

"Why yes, to be sure," resumed the landlord, "these are matters, as I said before, which one don't much care to talk about. I was unwilling to satisfy your inquiries yesterday, lest your incredulous curiosity should precipitate you into mischief, which, God above knows, has been the case with many; however, as I promised to give you a relation of the whole affair this morning, you shall find me as good as my word.

"Here, at the bottom of the village, stands a large house, which formerly was the residence of the lord of the manor. —Now, you must know, it so happened that, a great many years back, one of these lords was a terribly wicked man, who cared neither for God nor devil, and treated his subjects worse than his cattle. Nobody could do any thing to please him. —Even his own children he would bang and kick about like dogs, and, for the least trifle, order them to be thrown into a dark filthy hole or dungeon, where they were at last starved to death. His subjects he never called by any other name than his *beasts*, and as such he treated them. In short, he was a true devil incarnate!

"Now, this wicked man delighted in nothing so much as in hunting. In his woods he harbored all kinds of game, even the most savage—wild boars especially—which made terrible havoc and ruination in the fields and gardens of his peasants: and yet, if any of the latter only offered to drive away one of those furious animals, that was, perhaps, treading down his corn or devouring his turnips, he was sure to be confined for weeks together upon bread and water. Whenever this nobleman thought proper to go a hunting, the whole village was obliged to draw out and accompany him; and on these occasions he would make them supply the place of dogs, and set them upon the game, which whenever they were not able to catch, he would horsewhip and worry them with his hounds till they fell down dead at his feet.

"One time, as he was indulging in these cruel practices till late at night, he was thrown from his horse, and broke his neck upon the spot. The clergy would not suffer him to be interred in the church-yard like a Christian, for which reason he was buried in a corner of his park. But now the terrible judgments of divine vengeance became manifest; for to the present day his wretched soul is not suffered to rest. At certain stated times and seasons the wrath of Almighty God obliges him every night, the moment it strikes twelve, to ride through the village, and, with Belzebub and his hellish train, to drive into the manor-house, where he is fain to stay till one o'clock in the morning, which no sooner is heard to strike, than the whole infernal troop of them are remanded back to the bottomless pit.

"Since his death the manor-house has always been untenantable. Many who have foolishly attempted to sleep in it have paid for their temerity with their lives. Nay, I know it to be a fact, that several who have slept in my house, and who, on hearing the noise of his approach, have been daring enough to look out the window, have been punished with a swelled face, or even a particular cast in their eye, if not with a total deprivation of sight, for their rash curiosity." With these words our landlord concluded his long-winded harangue; and, wistfully eyeing us all round, regaled his delighted optics with the astonishment portrayed in our countenances. His pleasure was however, of short duration; the lieutanant instantly bursting out into a loud fit of laughter, for which, from the silence he observed during the landlord's narration, he seemed to have purposely reserved the whole collected force of his lungs.

" Nay, Sir, you may laugh as you please," replied the latter, with no small degree of impatience; " but I'll venture to lay the last farthing I'm worth in the world, that you laugh on the other side of your mouth by to-morrow morning, provided you have heart sufficient to stay here over night."

" That you shall soon see," was the lieutenant's reply; "not only here, my good friend, but in the very castle itself: and, were it haunted with a whole legion of devils—were it the very palace and pandemonium of Beelzebub,—will I pass the ensuing night. These gentlemen, I make no doubt," addressing his discourse to the count and myself, " will gladly favor me with their company."

My young nobleman was a man of honor. Not to accept this challenge would have appeared to him an indelible stain upon his character. His assent, therefore, was quickly given. For my part, I started a thousand objections, and representing to the lieutenant the dangers we might expose ourselves to, uncertain as we were what kind of spirits we should have to deal with, left no argument untried to dissuade him from his project: but the lieutenant, cutting me short,—

"I am a soldier, and wear a sword; and for gentlemen of our profession, ghosts of every description, both with bodies and without, have always the most prodigious respect!"

In short, I plainly saw that, by pretending to assert my magisterial authority over the count, I should only render myself ridiculous without effecting my purpose; for so resolutely bent was he upon accompanying the lieutenant at all events, that I am convinced he would have gone without me, had I persisted in my refusal. Forced, therefore, however reluctantly, to comply, I at length gave way to their entreaties; for to desert my pupil would have appeared to me an unpardonable breach of trust.

But how shall I describe the behavior of our landlord when he found us fully determined upon the adventure! His astonishment exceeded all conception, and with uplifted eyes and hands, he conjured us, in the name of the ever blessed Virgin Mary, and all the holy saints, to desist from so rash an enterprise. "I'll answer for it with my head," was his repeated declaration, "that not one of you will live to see the light of another day."

The lieutenant, however, turning all his pious remonstrances into ridicule, soon worked upon the irritability of his temper to that degree, that he left us to our fate, grumbling some hearty curses as he hurried out of the room.

Our conversation, as may easily be imagined, turned more upon spiritual than political subjects; when, after having pretty well exhausted our stock of ghostly knowledge, the lieutenant proposed a walk to the haunted castle, very judiciously observing, that it might not, perhaps, be altogether amiss to take a nearer view, by daylight, of those formidable premises which we had fixed upon for our nocturnal rendezvous. This proposal meeting with universal approbation, we hurried to put it into immediate execution.

An enormous pile of building in the Gothic taste, but terribly ruined and demolished, presented itself to our eyes. The castle was surrounded with a high wall, besides a wide and deep ditch in front, over which a drawbridge afforded us an easy passage. We had no occasion to stand knocking at the gate, for thrown, as it was, wide open, a troop of horse might have entered it in full gallop. The appearance of the place had something wonderfully awful and romantic. We drew, as with one common consent, our hangers, the moment we set foot in the hall. The pavement was of brick, but overgrown with weeds and mouldering grass. From thence we continued our way through a flight of empty desolate apartments, where spiders, rats, and owls, appeared to be the only tenants. Windows covered with dirt, with cobwebs, and even moss itself, afforded no other light than what found admission through the broken panes of glass: just sufficient to discover to our view the mouldering remains of several ancient pieces of furniture; chairs without backs, part of the iron-work of a large lamp, suspended, by a chain of the same metal, from the ceiling of one of the rooms; with two or three ricketty benches, that seemed ready to fall to pieces under the touch: these were the sole signs of the place ever having been inhabited by man.

Curiosity now prompted us to take a view of the subterraneous apartments of this antique building. Previous to our setting out on this expedition, we had the precaution to provide ourselves with a lantern and the necessary apparatus for procuring fire, which we now found exceedingly servicable. A stone staircase, at the further extremity of the hall, conducted us to a long, narrow, winding passage, arched over with brickwork, and terminating in a door cased over with iron. The lieutenant still leading the way, with his lantern in one hand and his drawn sword in the other, boldly advanced towards the door, which, yielding to his push, discovered a large vaulted place, resembling a cellar, but entirely empty, waste, and darker than the shades of midnight. A tainted air, impregnated with baneful vapors and pestilential dews, almost deprived us of the faculty of breathing, when we set foot in this subterraneous dungeon. On each side, facing the entrance, we perceived a pair of folding doors, secured with enormous bolts and a prodigious portcullis of massy iron. In vain was it for us to attempt further entrance. We hastened therefore from this loathsome scene back to the hall, where, like fishes restored to there native element, we felt our hearts expand on once more breathing fresh air.

As this appeared to us the most eligible place for passing the night, and giving our ghostly friends the meeting, in case they should think proper to pay us a visit, we endeavored to fit it up for their reception and our own as conveniently as possible. For this purpose, with the help of some rusty nails and detached pieces of wood, which we found in abundance in the solitary apartments, we at length contrived to make one broken table stand pretty decently upon its legs. We next essayed our ingenuity upon a couple of the ricketty benches, which were likewise, with much trouble, put in a condition that promised to secure us from all danger of their breaking down under us.

Not yet satisfied, however, with the discoveries we had made, we wandered again through the spacious untenanted apartments of the castle, but every where could meet with nothing but mouldering monuments of ruin and decay. The garden was the next place that curiosity prompted us to visit.—Melancholy, indeed, was the prospect that here presented itself.—Here was literally a place for dragons, for beasts and birds obscene, and for every thing that is filthy and abominable. Overgrown as it was with thorns and briers, with thistles, weeds, nettles, and long grass that whistled in the wind, our feet were not seldom entangled in the mazy labyrinth, whilst, our hangers were fain to open us a passage, which the spreading branches, indissolubly twisted and interwoven with each other seemed unwilling to afford us. Thus we continued our toilsome march through a long winding alley, formed of a double row of beech-trees, that led to the extremity of the garden, at the upper end of which we discovered, emerging from the confused mass of briers, thorns, &c. that surrounded and almost concealed it from our view, a black marble urn, supported by a column of red porphyry. The workmanship was truly exquisite, but our eyes searched in vain for any inscription; and already were we proceeding on our return, when the count's foot stumbled against some hard body, buried among the weeds, at no great distance from the urn: on inspection, it proved to be a wooden cross, on which the following words were barely legible:

HIC JACET

GODOFREDUS HAUSSINGERUS,

PECCATOR.

The date, if I mistake not, was 1603.

After gazing on each other for some time in silent astonishment, "What gentlemen," demanded the lieutenant, "is your opinion of this curious epitaph?"

"For my part," replied the count hastily, "I consider it as a convincing evidence of the truth of our landlord's narration."

Fatigued as we already were with the arduous task of opening to ourselves a passage with our hangers through the mazy windings and intricate labyrinths of this desolated place (for garden it certainly could no longer be called, with any propriety), we felt little inclination to extend our painful researches to its remoter parts, but hurried back to the main hall, where meeting with no fresh objects to excite our curiosity we set out on our return to the inn

Our landlord, from whom we had cautiously concealed our projected visit to the castle, was, on our return, almost petrified with horror and astonishment at our bold, and, as he called it *astonishing* presumption. At the same time, conceiving it his duty to deter us, if possible, from rushing on certain and immediate destruction, lest our blood, he observed, might peradventure fall upon him, he fairly washed his hands of us, giving us the second edition of his morning lecture, enriched with various additions, emendations, and improvements. But, alas! his pious intentions met with no better success than before. The lieutenant, indulging his natural propensity for satire, soon rallied him out of all temper; wherefore, giving us up for a precious triumvirate of stiffnecked incorrigible blockheads, he only requested of us to settle the reckoning before our departure; and, wishing us that success which he dared not to hope, took his leave of us as of persons no longer designed for this world.

It was between nine and ten at night that we sailed from the inn, all three well armed with a hanger and a couple of pistols per man; excepting the lieutenant's servant, who, though he carried fire-arms, (being provided with a lantern) acted chiefly in the capacity of sutler to the troop. Heroes in all ages have ever found an empty stomach a great drawback upon valor, for which reason, the lieutenant, who understood the whole art of war, both theory and practice, as well as Cæsar or Alexander the Great, and very sagaciously reflected that, in a place where ghosts were supposed to inhabit, little store of belly timber was to be expected, took care to clap a basket with a couple of roasted fowls and three or four bottles of wine upon his servant's shoulders, and, thus equipped at all points, we began our march.

On our arrival at the appointed place of rendezvous, we found every thing exactly in the same order as we had left it. Table and benches were still standing as firm as ever; we took our seats, and, encouraged by the lieutenant's example, ate as heartily as any pious Catholic may be supposed to do previously to a seven weeks' lent, not forgetting to do justice to the wine, which circulated briskly enough. This time however, good cheer was found to fail of the desired effect; for, instead of inspiriting our drooping valor, it acted rather like a leaden weight upon our eyelids, which with difficulty were kept from closing, although the clock had not yet struck eleven. The intermediate space between this and the *canonical* hour of meeting our *ghostly* friends we endeavored to beguile by reading "Hagedorn's Poems," of which I fortunately happened to have a copy with me. In this office I was alternately assisted by the count and the lieutenant, till the latter, on examining his watch, and finding it within a quarter of twelve, closed the book, and, briskly running up stairs to a front room in the first floor, took his stand facing the window, which commanded as fair a view of the forecourt, and the circumjacent plain, as a dark unfriendly night would admit. The count and myself followed his example, and in this posture we awaited the scenes that were to follow, leaving the lieutenant's servant fast asleep in the hall.

At length the ominious hour began to strike,—more awful, in our present circumstances, than the funeral knell of some departed friend. Dreadful was the midnight silence that reigned around us. The very pulse of nature seemed suspended ; the faculty of breathing almost taken from us. And now the last stroke ceased to vibrate on our ears. Instantly the whole fabric shook with the sound of horns, trumpets, &c. that seemed to rend the echoing air ; while the dashing of horses' hoofs made the solid ground tremble as with an earthquake : the rams' horns of Jericho were mere pop-guns—the downfall of its walls a mere crash, compared with the dreadful thunder that now assailed our ears. Impenetrable darkness, however, added to the velocity of their course, prevented us from gratifying our curiosity, and distinguishing the authors of this wild and terrible uproar.

Swift as the winged whirlwind, and with equal impetuosity, advanced the sable troop. Three times they made the circuit of the walls ; then, suddenly halting, drew up at no great distance from the castle, facing the drawbridge. In an instant died away the noise, like the doubtful blast still quivering on the trees, " when the rude storm has blown its fill." Silence resumed her wonted empire ; but not the less impossible was it for us to discover either horse or rider.

Whilst we stood bewildered in thought, and forming conjectures on the scene we had just witnessed, a more immediate subject of alarm presented itself in the court. The rattling of spurs ; the sound of footsteps, whether human or not, was uncertain ; and a confused noise, as from a multitude passing and repassing, gave us reason to apprehend that the troop had dismounted, and were preparing to pay us a visit. Involuntary horror siezed upon me: a cold sweat overran my whole frame ; my knees tottered: I feared, I trembled, I knew not why. This noise, however, was of short duration ; for, like the former, it gradually died away, and was succeeded by gloomy and profound silence.

"Shall we rush into the court? shall we seek to join them?" demanded the lieutenant with his usual firmness and intrepidity. I shook my head by way of reply ; the count did the same.

"Then am I like to go alone, it seems !" returned the fiery youth, and immediately sallied down stairs, holding a pistol on full cock in each hand, and his drawn sword under his left arm. He was not long before he joined us again.

"There must be some mystery in all this," he exclaimed; "not the smallest trace of either horse or rider to be found!"

No answer on our part sufficiently showed that we were equally at a loss to account for so strange and singular an adventure. The lieutenant seated himself, and, with his eyes fixed immovably upon the ground, seemed lost in a deep reverie: the count endeavored to banish more unwelcome ideas with reading; whilst I, giving way to the calls of nature, soon lay buried in a profound sleep.

The report of a pistol awakened me; I started up incontinently. The sound of horns and trumpets again saluted my ears, but presently the noise died away as before. At the same instant the lieutenant and the count entered the room. They had, it seems, like myself, been overpowered with sleep, from which they were roused by the return of the uproar in the court, that had so greatly alarmed us at twelve. Eager, therefore, to discover the authors, they had sallied out with their pistols. They met, however, with little success: the whole troop was off before they reached the court. The lieutenant, dashing one of the panes of the hall window in pieces with his pistol, sent a bullet after them; but, some white horses excepted, could discover nothing through the impenetrable gloom that surrounded them.

"Ghost or not," he concluded his narration, "they seem to stand in great awe of us; and, for the present, my advice is, that we rather spend the remainder of the night upon some clean straw in the inn, than continue here upon rotten benches of wood, which we hardly dare trust with our weight."

This proposal was gladly accepted, and away we truged to the inn, greatly to the satisfaction of John, the lieutenant's groom, who, it seems, took little delight in hunting after ghosts.

Long had we to stand knocking at the inn-door before entrance was granted. At length our landlord in person made his appearance.

"What! and are your honors still alive?" he began with fluttering voice, crossing himself all the time: "or rather are ye come from purgatory, to upbraid me with your destruction? Holy Father Romboldus! and all ye blessed saints, defend me; and witness for me, how much I tried to dissuade them from their impious undertaking!" With these words he banged the door without any further ceremony right in our face.

Vexed as we were with this inhospitable reception, we could not refrain from laughing, and that heartily, at the superstitious fears and ludicrous grimaces of our landlord: till the lieutenant, out of all patience (for the night was none of the warmest), resolved to stand kicking his heels no longer. Thundering, therefore, at the door, as though he designed to pull the house down over the owner's head, he swore by all the saints in Christendom, that he would reduce the place to ashes, and utterly annihilate every soul within it, unless immediate admittance was afforded us. This menace failed not of the desired effect ; our Cerberus presently relented, and, with many awkward apologies begging pardon, for what in fact we had no right to be offended at, spread some clean straw upon the floor, and, wishing us a good repose, retired to his own apartment.

On our getting up, which was not till nearly noon, the lieutenant declared himself by no means satisfied with the result of last night's adventure ; and, signifying to us his intention of keeping watch the ensuing night in the forecourt of the castle, concluded with desiring us to bear him company.

The count's eyes immediately reverted to me, seeming to expect from my reply that denial which he was unwilling to deliver himself. I accordingly represented to the lieutenant the imposibility of our complying with his request ; that the nature of our affairs would not suffer us to throw away any more time than had been lost already; not to mention the danger of such an undertaking; four men being, at the best, but a sorry match against a whole troop of horse, as we had every reason, from the evidence of our own ears, to believe them.

"As to the danger of the frolic," replied the lieutenant, "if that's your main objection, it is easily removed. We need only take a doven stout rawboned fellows along with us. A few shillings and a bottle of brandy (which, though not to be had here, may easily be procured from some neighboring town) will entitle us to pick and choose our gang from the whole village; and take my word for it, Sir, we shall have a frolic, the like of which was never seen. To-morrow morning, if you think proper to depart, you may depend upon my company as your fellow traveller."

The count was easily prevailed upon ; neither, indeed, was the proposal displeasing to myself. The groom, therefore, was immediately despatched to the next town to procure brandy, and other refreshments, whilst our postillion received commission to sound his horn,* as a signal. In a few minutes we had the whole village assembled before the door, when, silence being ordered, the lieutenant, from the superior eminence of a deal table, addressed his wondering congregation to the following effect :—

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* In Germany it is customary for the postillions to carry a small French horn with them, which is certainly a more melodious instrument than that made use of by the guards of the mail coach

" Brave, gallant, and aspiring heroes! such of you as have heart sufficient to offer your services to accompany us to the haunted castle, well known to all inhabitants of this village, there to remain, and spend the night with us, and in all respects to act obedient to the orders which you shall then and there receive; such, I say, as shall willingly offer their services for this purpose, and who, on inspection, shall be judged worthy of being employed in so glorious a cause, shall receive the sum of sixpence per man, over and above a plentiful supply of brandy and other necessary refreshments, to keep your noble hearts from fainting."

Laughable was it to see the effects which this harangue produced. Not a man in the whole assembly but immediately offered his services with so much zeal, that we had reason to apprehend a premature exertion of their valor. To prevent, therefore, as much as in us lay, the effusion of human blood (for they seemed ready to go to blows for the preference), fifteen of the stoutest and most promising were drafted from this heroic corps, and the residue, in order to atone for their disappointment, were promised a proper reward, provided they demeaned themselves lovingly and peaceably. Hereupon our troop received commission to attend us at the inn by ten o'clock precisely. As to the choice of their weapons, that was left to their own discretion.

Such vigorous preparations could not fail of exciting the utmost astonishment in our landlord, who, now regarding us as something more than human—as sorcerers and magicians at least, if not devils incarnate—seemed himself half willing to accompany us, and assist in purging the haunted castle of the foul spirits that inhabited it.

With the approach of evening, however, his courage began to cool ; wherefore, pretending some urgent business, that rendered his presence at home indispensably necessary, he contented himself with wishing us success to our undertaking.

Our brave troop, on the other hand, neglected not to attend their appointment with great punctuality ; and formidable indeed was the appearance they made, armed with scythes, pickaxes, flails, bludgeons, pitchforks, pruning-hooks, spades, and

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in this country. The Germans having a natural genius for music, many of these postillions are tolerable performers ; and where the road, as is frequently the case, leads through large and extensive woods, this travelling concert has a wonderful effect.

whatever weapons chance or fancy put into their hands. Having drawn ourselves up in battle-array before the inn-door, we began our march to the castle, headed by the lieutenant. In the rear followed our provision, camp equipage, and military stores; consisting of brandy, cold roast beef, half a dozen peck loaves, together with some benches, which we borrowed from the tap-room; a large deal table, the same on which the lieutenant made his famous harangue, and lastly an iron lamp, with the necessary apparatus for procuring fire. These were conveyed in wheelbarrows, and in this gallant order we made our triumphant entry into the castle.

The court having been marked out as the place of encampment, we pitched our tents between the gate and the drawbridge. A plentiful libation was then made to the *god* of *brandy*, whose nostrils must have been highly regaled with the grateful fumes of incense and burnt offerings, every hero replenishing his pipe with a potent supply of India's salutary weed: and, as our victory in this *ghostly crusade* though unfought, was none the less certain, hymns of triumph were sung beforehand on the occasion.

In proportion as the brandy-bottle diminished, the courage and musical disposition of our company increased. We had, therefore, no need, as on the preceeding night, to read ourselves hoarse, in order to repulse the encroaching advances of sleep. The wonderful assistance which valor reaps from military music—fifes, trumpets, drums, and kettle-drums, &c. is too plain and obvious to stand in need of any comment or illustration: otherwise, we might refer our readers to the history of the Lacedæmonians, who, after suffering repeated defeats from the Messenians, proved at length victorious,—not from their own inherent valor, or the merit and skill of their commanders, but by choosing the Athenian songster and poet, Tyrtæus, for their general; although the said Tyrtæus cut but a sorry figure for a militia captain, inasmuch as he was blind of one eye, lame, and, in fact, passed for little better than an idiot. If such, then, were the effects produced by one songster, in a whole army, what must we suppose to have been the case with our brave troop, consisting, as it did, of vocal performers from first to last? To so high a pitch was their valor wound up, by the noble songs which they rehearsed, not forgetting to whet their whistle, as occasion required, with plentiful draughts of brandy, that they laughed at, challenged, and defied, the whole infernal host of hell, with Beelzebub, their leader, at the head!

It was now within a few minutes of twelve. The lieutenant, pointing at his watch, beckoned witb his hand: instantly the military concert was suspended; awful silence succeeded in its place; expectation stood a tiptoe; and astonishment, mixed with horror, appeared visibly portrayed in every countenance. Thus we kept our post till the church-bell began to strike, at which our country boobies pricked up their ears, and, with gaping mouths, seemed to swallow the sound. But when they heard the distant dashing of horses' hoofs, and the thundering echo of trumpets, that followed immediately upon the last strokes, nothing can convey an adequate idea of their terror and surprise. They no longer dared to regard one another, except with stolen looks; and had not fear effectually chained them to their seat, there is little room to doubt but a precipitate flight, on their part, would soon have deprived us of our worthy comrades and protectors.

Meanwhile the noise, increasing as it approached, drew nearer and nearer, and presently was heard distinctly in the subterraneous apartments of the castle. Suddenly, however, it subsided: all was perfectly still and silent as before. But, in less than ten minutes, the uproar returned more powerful than ever; and, swift as lightning, though still invisible, retreated the ghostly cavalcade, in full gallop, from the castle.

The lieutenant, followed by the count and myself, rushed out in pursuit of them. But though we flew, as it were, upon wings, being fully determined to gratify our curiosity, it was impossible for us to discover any other object than the distant glare of some white horses. We returned, therefore, hopeless and dissatisfied, to our companions.

These we found, on our entrance into the court, stretched out like dead, with their faces to the ground. Table, lamp, benches, wheelbarrows,—in short, our whole camp-equipage, together with the brandy-bottle and provisions which we had brought with us, were gone. The moon, shining but dimly through the opposing clouds, barely reflected light sufficient to make this discovery. Great, as may reasonably be supposed, was our astonishment. The lieutenant, seizing one of our prostrate companions by the shoulders gave him two or three hearty shakes, and endeavored to lift him on his legs; but this valiant champion, firmly persuaded that he was under the clutches of some blood-thirsty caco-dæmon, who, in all probability, wanted to hurry him away, full drive, to the bottomless pit, began to roar out so lustily, that we had presently the whole troop at their prayers, each one imploring assistance from his favorite saint. Sancta Mater and Kyrie Eleison, intermixed with groans unutterable, resounded from every quarter. The scene was ludicrous beyond description, and fully justified the assertion of the Roman poet—

"Primus in orbe Deos fecit timor."

After feasting our eyes and ears a full hour at least with the cowardly devotion of these miserable wretches, we adjourned to the inn, leaving our companions to celebrate high mass by themselves. Our landlord was not a little surprised at seeing us return unattended, and accosted us with at least a thousand questions; but as we stood in need of rest, we deferred satisfying his inquisitive curiosity till morning, and laid ourselves down upon the straw prepared for our reception.

Our sleep, however, was not of long duration, for no sooner did it begin to dawn, than the whole village was in an uproar, and young and old assembled before the inn-door. Our gallant companions, it seems, with the return of day, had gradually got the better of their fears, and, venturing at last to look around them, discovered, to their no small surprise, that we were missing. Whether their grief at our supposed destruction proceeded from any real regard, or from the fear of losing the promised gratuity for their faithful services, they immediately hurried to the inn, and, with dreadful lamentations, related the disaster that had happened. Laughable was it for us to hear the various strange and contradictory accounts which they gave of last night's adventure. Some would have it that we were torn in pieces; others swore roundly, that they had seen us carried off by a whole legion of devils: but all of them were unanimous in bearing honorable testimony to their own prowess, and the signal feats of heroism they had achieved. But what was their surprise at learning from our landlord, who hitherto had purposely concealed this intelligence from them, that we were not only still in the land of the living, but had returned triumphant from the ghostly expedition! At first they refused to give credit to his words, but, finding him positive in his assertions, they insisted on being introduced to us immediately. This accordingly took place; mutual congratulations passed between us, the promised reward was faithfully distributed, and, after satisfying our landlord for the loss of his tables, benches, &c., we began to prepare for our departure. The lieutenant, indeed, wished still to try his luck once more, and, for that purpose, proposed that we should secrete ourselves in the castle the ensuing night; but to this neither the count nor myself would in any wise consent.

We sat out, therefore, about seven in the morning, though the weather was far from favorable, the wind getting exceedingly high, which, added to the frequent flying showers that passed over us, rendered the air extremely cold and damp. Already were we within less than a mile of the Black Forest, when I perceived the lieutenant, who rode on horseback before us, accompanied by his groom, suddenly stop short: after a short pause, he turned round his horse's head, and took a cross direction, towards a small rivulet that flowed on the left side of the road. Curiosity prompted me to look after him—I let down the window of the carriage, and discovered an object that demanded my whole attention.

Regardless of the raging storm and beating rain, that now began to fall pretty rapidly, sat a hoary-headed hermit, venerable with age, on the summit of a rock that projected nearly half way over the stream. He held in his hands a volume of considerable size, and seemed entirely absorbed in contemplation. No friendly covering defended his aged head from the rude inclemency of the storm; his grey locks sported with the wind, and, dropping wet with the rain, watered his back and shoulders: his dress was equally singular, consisting of a loose robe, or gown, fastened about his loins with a leathern girdle, after the manner of the Asiatics, and seemed to proclaim him a native of the east; at his feet lay a long pilgrim's staff, an hour-glass, and a knapsack made of tiger's skin.

Struck with surprise at the sight of this extraordinary character, I instantly quitted the carriage, in order to converse with him; the count followed my example. We arrived at the spot just as the lieutenant began to interrogate him.

"And pray, Mr. Wiseacre, what book is that you are studying so intensely?"

The sage seemed to take no notice of this question, but continued to read, without answering a word.

"What book have you there? demanded the lieutenant a second time, alighting from his horse, placing himself behind the pilgrim, and endeavoring to look over his shoulder.

Still the sage made no reply, but kept his eyes immovably fixed upon the book he was reading.

My curiosity was, if possible, still greater than the lieutenant's; I accordingly stationed myself quite close to the wonderful stranger, in order to take a nearer view, both of his person and the volume he held in his hand. The leaves were of yellow parchment, and apparently of great antiquity; the characters bore some resemblance to the Arabic, and were, as I perceived, drawn with a pen in various colors, but chiefly in red and gold.

Meanwhile, the count and lieutenant had insensibly engaged the pilgrim in discourse. The latter giving Mr. Wiseacre, as he termed him, a shake by the shoulders, and that none of the softest, repeated, with authoritative voice, his former demand:—

"What is it you are studying, my friend?"

The sage seemed evidently disconcerted; knit his brows, and, slowly raising his head, regarded us a long time with fixed and silent indignation · then opening his lips, with a voice calculated to inspire the utmost reverence and awe, replied—

"Wisdom."

Count. And pray what language is it, then, in which this book is written?

Pilgrim. The language of wisdom.

Count. And what is it you call wisdom?

Pilgrim. Every thing of which thou hast no conception.

Lieutenant. Well then, Mr. Wiseacre, that being the case, as you possess such extraordinary knowledge of things which the rest of mankind have no conception of, I shall be happy, methinks, to ask you a question or two.

Pilgrim (viewing him sternly). Ask on.

Lieutenant. Not far from this place stands a village, which is said to be haunted by a whole troop of devils. The manor-house, it seems, is their nocturnal place of rendezvous. These gentlemen, together with myself, have kept watch in the castle these two nights past—

Pilgrim (interrupting him.) And yet are not a whit the wiser than before: for thou art not the man to whom wisdom deigns her hidden lore; nor is the management of ghosts to thee intrusted.

Lieutenant. That man, we suppose, can be no other than yourself.

Pilgrim. I understand the language of wisdom.

The lieutenant, naturally addicted to raillery, could no longer refrain from bursting into a loud laugh. Of this the pilgrim took no manner of notice; but, returning to his former study, was soon absorbed in meditation, from which, however, he was again roused by the count.

"Friend," began the latter, "as such great wisdom appears to be contained in the book you read, may we be allowed to ask who those spirits are, and for what reason they thus infest the above mentioned castle?"

Pilgrim (after a long pause). None but the spirits themselves dare resolve thee that question.

Count. What, then, does your famous book of wisdom treat of.

Pilgrim. Of the manner in which spirits may be forcibly compelled to appear, and a full confession extorted from them

Count. How happens it, then, that you have never essayed your art upon those which disturb the peace of the neighboring village?

Pilgrim. Because I have no wish, no interest in the case

Lieutenant. Well but, Mr. Wiseacre, suppose that we should make you an offer of our purses; might not money, perhaps, have some weight in persuading you to make a trial of your skill?

Pilgrim. (in a violent rage). Mean sordid wretch! begone can gold be deemed equivalent to wisdom.

Lieutenant. What, then, can purchase it?

Pilgrim. Nothing! Will your courage stand the test?

Lieutenant. Were there any doubt of that, we should not have ventured to keep watch in a place so formidable.

Pilgrim. Well, then, watch one night more: precisely three quarters past eleven you will see me, to a certainty. Meanwhile, leave me to my meditations.

The peremptory tone and manner in which he pronounced these words put it out of our power to disobey.—We retreated slowly to our carriage, looking back, almost every minute, at the wonderful pilgrim, who instantly relapsed into his former study. The lieutenant, as he remounted his horse, proposed that we should return to the inn, and, putting off our departure till the morrow, give the stranger the meeting at the time appointed.

Much as I disliked the project, it was in vain for me to raise objections: the curiosity of the count was wound up to the highest pitch; my consent, therefore, was rather extorted than obtained from me.

Our landlord, on learning the cause of our return, was little better than distracted with joy; for, exclusive of the profits he hoped to reap from another ghostly frolic, having been paid for more than double the value of his table, benches, &c. lost in our last expedition, his brain was next to turned with the marvellous relations our valliant companions gave of the adventure. Nothing was talked of, but how frightfully the spectres had appeared; how furiously they broke in upon us; how they breathed fire and smoke through their nostrils; with eyes flaming-red, as big as any pint basins: notwithstanding all which, they had, they said, laid so manfully about them, that the whole infernal troop was forced to take a precipitate flight, and were, long before this, ten miles at least below the bottom of the Red Sea! Hence, we saw ourselves regarded, by the whole village, as beings of a superior order, and had enough to do to answer all the questions put to us by our admirers. This was highly pleasing to the lieutenant, who diverted himself, the whole day, with practising upon the simplicity of these rustics; and, I am firmly persuaded, told more fortunes in the course of six hours than many astrologers have an opportunity of doing in the course of as many years.

On the approach of night, we had a numerous army at com, mand, without being necessitated, as before, to beat up for volunteers; young and old entreating us to permit them to bear us company: they neither demanded pay nor provisions; the bare honor of serving under us was, as they observed, more than sufficient recompense. Company, however, was not what we at present wanted; not to mention that we had already but too well experienced what sort of dependance we ought to place upon their valor and assistance; we dissembled, therefore, our intentions; but, finding even this ineffectual to answer our purpose, we were fain, in order to get rid of our troublesome visitors, to pretend ourselves sleepy, and to order the straw to be got ready for our reception.

About ten we stole away as privately as possible to the castle. On our arrival in the court, the lieutenant's servant lighted up the lamp we had brought with us; after which we repaired to the hall, where, finding the benches we had formerly erected for our accommodation still standing, we seated ourselves, and waited in anxious expectation the time appointed for meeting our unknown conductor.

The lieutenant appeared doubtful whether the pilgrim might not fail of his appointment, and discovered evident symptoms of mistrust, that he had no other view in promising to meet us, than merely to sport with our credulity. But the count, who, from his youth, had always manifested a strong hankering after the marvellous, was so entirely prepossessed with the venerable appearance of the hoary-headed sage, that he was ready to pledge his honor for his punctuality. This gave birth to a curious controversy between the lieutenant and the count, on the subject of supernatural agency; the former ridiculing the whole system as visionary and preposterous, whilst the latter was firmly of opinion that, however exaggerated and disguised such accounts might be in the detail, the doctrine itself was founded in truth and experience. For my part, I cursed and damned the pilgrim most devoutly, and only wished that we had never seen or given ourselves the least trouble about him.

In this manner did we endeavor to beguile the tedious hour of expectation. Before us lay our watches placed upon the table, to which our eyes almost momentarily reverted. The minute-hand had hardly pointed to three quarters past eleven, when we plainly distinguished the tread of human footsteps across the passage.

"You are perfectly right, my lord (quoth the lieutenant, addressing himself to the count), our pilgrim is a man of honor." With these words he snatched up the lamp, and went to meet him.

Our conductor had now reached the hall. His dress was much the same as when we first beheld him, excepting that on his head he wore a kind of turban, and carried his knapsack strapped about his shoulders. With slow and solemn steps he approached the place where we were seated; then, suddenly stopping short, beckoned with his hand for us to follow him. We obeyed, and, leaving the lieutenant's servant fast asleep, behind us, followed him to the stone staircase at the opposite end of the hall. This we descended, and next traversed, in awful silence, the long winding passage to which it led, till we came to the door of the vault, which the lieutenant had burst open on our first visit to the castle.

Here our conductor again stopped short; took the lamp out of the hand of the lieutenant, and, viewing us attentively all round, with a stern, forbidding look, that seemed to presage strange wonders, addressed us in a trembling tone of voice:

"Let awful silence seal your lips, nor dare
To tempt that fate which prudence bids beware;
For know one word makes instant death your share."

The impression which his speech made upon our minds may be more easily imagined than described. We entered the vault, not without horror and reluctance; this time, however, we found the air of this subterraneous dungeon less noxious and pestilential than before, owing, probably, to the door having been left opon by the lieutenant, at the time it was forced, as related above. Our conductor, approaching the folding doors on the right-hand side, pushed back the large enormous bolts which guarded them with a degree of ease that well might create astonishment; then drawing forth from his bosom a ponderous key of massy iron, fastened round his neck by a chain of the same metal, he thrice pronounced a word of mystic, but to us incomprehensible, meaning:

————————"And in the keyhole turns
The intricate wards, and every bolt and bar
Unfastens: on a sudden, open fly,
With impetuous recoil and jarring sound,
The infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
Harsh thunder."————————

Horrible, beyond description, was the place into which we now entered. The form was circular, arched over with brick, and totally impervious to the smallest ray of light from without. Hollow sounded the ground beneath our feet, and every step we took re-echoed back distantly from the walls. Facing the entrance, appeared another pair of folding doors, secured with locks and bolts, more formidable than the former.

A blue inconstant flame, accompanied with a strong sulphurous smell that rendered the faculty of breathing extremely difficult, whilst it enhanced the gloomy horror of the scene, gradually discovered to our view the mouldering monuments of ruin and decay. Rotten coffins, human bones, ghostly skulls, shrouds, scutcheons, urns, and all the various symptoms of mortality, were seen on every side. In the middle of the vault arose a lofty bier, which supported a black leaden coffin, of unusual magnitude. Over it hung a lamp, dependant from a triple chain of iron.

Our conductor uncovered his head; we followed his example, and ranged ourselves, in awful silence, round the coffin, but still at such a distance, that we could barely touch it with outstretched arms. Then placing the lamp held in his hands upon the floor, the necromantic sage proceeded to untie his knapsack, from which, together with the book he was studying when we first set eyes upon him, he took out a magic wand, composed of three different pieces, which fastened together in one, by means of joints, like a fishing-rod, and a tin box filled with red sand.

With this he bestrewed the adjacent parts of the floor; and, having fastened his rod together, described therewith three magic circles, parallel at equal distances in the sand. The innermost was occupied by the exorcist; in the second stood the count, the lieutenant, and myself; the outermost being left empty, probably by way of defence, or to serve as a rampart, in case the evil spirits should think proper to meditate any sudden attack upon us. Thus duly armed, intrenched, and fortified, according to the *demoniac* system of *tactics*—(such of our readers as wish for a fuller account of this science, are respectfully referred to the famous treatise, *De Dæmonologia*, published by that learned and pious scribe, Joannes Bodinus)—we held ourselves in readiness against the ghostly invasion.

The sage, crossing his hands over his breast, stood for some minutes motionless as a statue, with his eyes directed towards heaven, or at least towards the ceiling of the vault. Suddenly, he appeared seized with violent convulsions; the features of his countenance became distorted to a ghastly degree, his eyes began to roll, his brows knitted together, in a manner hideous to behold; his teeth chattered in his head, his hair bristled up like quills upon the fretful porcupine; in short, every part of his body bore witness to the big feelings with which his heart seemed ready to burst. Words at length found their way, but in a language to us quite unintelligible.—They were pronounced in a hollow tone of voice, and with surprising vehemence. He next opened the mystic book, and, with the same continued agitation of face and body, began to read in a kind of half whisper; the sweat all the time running down his face, as though the iron hand of death had seized upon him

The longer the sage continued to read, the more terrible became his convulsions; till, at length, unable to contain himself, he flung the book out of his hand with great violence against the ground. Immediately the fury of his looks subsided, his eyes ceased to roll, and his whole frame became more composed. With both his hands outstretched, and pointing with his wand to the coffin that lay before us, he again stood motionless as a statue.

The sound of horns and trumpets, with which the whole fabric now began to shake, proclaimed the arrival of the midnight hunters. Still the sage continued motionless. The noise drew nearer, and presently the troop rushed thundering into the court. Still the sage continued motionless. The next instant we heard them rapidly descending the stone staircase. Inward horror seized upon us: but still the sage continued motionless. And now the tread of their feet resounded along the narrow winding passage that led to the vault next us. The sage, with a sudden motion turning himself round in his circle, waved his magic wand in the air, and all was silent in a moment.

Thrice, with tremendous voice, the sage pronounced a mystic word of unknown import; striking each time violently with his wand against the ground. Earth, heard the summons, and obeyed. A sudden flash of lightning shot trembling across the walls, whilst, thundering in our ears, was heard the dreadful subterraneous peal. All nature seemed convulsed; rocked, as with an earthquake, shook the hollow vault; our lamps, though well supplied with oil, refused to burn, and, ere the deep-mouthed thunder ceased to roll, we found ourselves surrounded with midnight darkness.

Soon, however, a faint glimmering light began to diffuse itself from the centre of the vault, increasing every moment, till the place was sufficiently illuminated for us to distinguish the surrounding object. We now perceived, with horror and astonishment, that this light proceeded from the inside of the leaden coffin, the lid of which, gradually lifting up, apparently from some internal force, at length disclosed to view a human figure, pale and ghostly, clad in a flowing white garment, stained with blood. With wild disorder in her looks, she cast her hollow eyes around; pushed back the long black tresses of hair, which, matted with gore, descended below her waist, and, baring her bosom, pointed to the gaping orifice of a deadly wound, inflicted beneath her left breast. Drops of blood still trickled from her pierced heart, and dreadfully resounded her groans from the vault.

Approaching the other circle with a furious threatening mien, she seemed preparing to rush upon us. The sage stretched forth his hand, struck *thrice* with his wand against the magic boundary, and instantly the threatening form shrank back.

"Who art thou?" demanded the apparition; "and by what authority dare thy unhallowed steps profane the place where spirits unembodied seek repose?"

"And who art thou!" replied the sage sternly, and not the least daunted, "that darest disturb the peace of this ill-fated mansion?"

"Not I!" howled she, in a lamentable piteous tone of voice; "not I, but the damned spirit of my husband! Bear witness, this accursed steel—displaying a bloody dagger in her right hand—bear witness, this deep wound, still reeking with my gore;" here she again pointed to her breast—"'tis he, and he alone, disturbs the peace of this whole village; 'tis he that violates even my repose!"

The Sage. But wherefore?

Spirit. No time was given for repentance: no friendly warning bade me in haste secure my peace with heaven. Fearless, I pressed the downy couch; undreaded and unseen, the dark assassin dealt the murderous blow. Thus sent with all my sins unpardoned on my head, I suffer here, awhile, the torments of the purging flame. But double wrath pursues my murderer, whom the righteous Judge above has doomed to bear the punishment due to his sins and mine!

The Sage. Unhappy spirit! betake thyself to rest. By the deep secrets of yon mystic book! by that dread power which hell itself controls! by all the terrors of the world unknown! I swear thy rest shall never be disturbed!

The spirit, making a low bow in token of gratitude, regained the coffin, where it presently disappeared under the lid, which now returned to its former place. The light that issued from the inside gradually died away, as the coffin closed, leaving us once more involved in thick impenetrable darkness.

Petrified with horror and amazement, having neither will to stay nor power to move, we stood a long time senseless and immovable.

At length a dreadful flash of lightning, bursting full in our faces, ran whizzing along the walls, and louder than before rattled the hoarse rebellious thunder in our ears. Instantaneously our lamps, self-lighted, began to burn again; whilst silence once more resumed its wonted empire around us.

Our conductor hereupon, with great composure, gathered up the scattered contents of his knapsack, replaced it upon his shoulders, and beckoned, with his hand, for us to follow him. After carefully relocking the door, and pushing home the bolts, he drew forth from his pocket a piece of yellow pearchment, about six inches square, and inscribed with the same kind of characters as his book appeared to be written in. This he laid upon the wings of the folding doors, in such a manner that it covered both in equal proportions; then sealing it at the four corners with red wax, and a large iron seal, he again pronounced some short mystic sentences, and with his wand described the emblem of a *cross* from one end of the door to the other.

We were now in the empty vault which we had before visited on our first excursion to the castle. The sage, advancing to the opposite door on the left hand, repeated his mystic ceremonies. The lock soon yielded to his trusty key. We entered. Our way led through another winding passage, arched over with brick like the former, but much wider and longer; with this additional difference, that it had six or seven doors, all strongly secured on each side, besides a larger one of massy iron, in which it terminated.

This being likewise opened with great ease, we had next to ascend a long flight of stone steps: at the top of which, another door, studded with enormous iron nails, presented itself. Here our conductor again stopped short, paused a while, and with great solemnity repeated his former injunctions respecting silence, although there seemed but little need for this precaution, not a single word having been exchanged between us all the time.

The opening of this door was attended with much greater ceremony than any other. We likewise took notice that our conductor, for this purpose, made use of a different key than he had before employed; a circumstance which seemed rather ominous to the lieutenant, as I could plainly perceive, by several significant looks which he cast both at the count and myself. We had however, gone too far to recede. A narrow passage, in which it was impossible to stand upright, conducted us to an iron trap-doos opening upon a second flight of steps. There we descended, and found ourselves in a gloomy dungeon of a considerable size; dark as the shades of midnight, and damp as the falling dews, when Sol withdraws his cheering rays. Fronting the staircase, and on each side, appeared another formidable door.

Advancing into the middle of this dismal place, the sage made a signal for us to range ourselves round him. Hereupon, the ground was bestrewed with red sand, in which he, as before, described *three* magic circles with his wand, and, opening his books, began to read softly, with great agitation of body. Then throwing his book upon the ground, he waved his wand in air, turned himself round with surprising velocity, and thrice pronounced, with a loud and dreadful voice, the same mystic word which he had formely made use of.

The whole dungeon instantly appeared on fire: the forked lightnings, reverberating from the wall, flashed with dreadful impetuosity in our faces, succeeded with peals of thunder, that seemed to forebode the total dissolution of nature. Earth felt the potent shock, and trembled to its centre: all the doors of our prison flew open with a noise louder than the loudest thunder: above us and around us shook the Gothic pile, threatening to overwhelm us beneath its ruins. At the same time, our lamp went out, and in its stead was seen a blue sulphureous flame hovering over the steps of the stone staircase, from whence it now began to roll itself down. Hollow groans, and the dismal clanking of chains, invaded our ears. Terror, beyond the power of language to describe, laid hold of us.

As the noise drew nearer, the sage placed himself with his face towards the stone staircase, and soon we saw, with horror inexpressible, a grim and ghastly figure, of uncommon magnitude, descending down the steps. A double row of chains were fastened to his feet and hands, which, rattling at every step he took, grated harsh infernal thunder in our ears. His garment appeared as if it had been newly dipped in blood; his right eyeball was forced out of its socket, and the upper part of his skull was shattered to pieces. Thus, horrible to behold, he approached, with furious mien, the outer circles, foaming at the mouth, and grinding his teeth like the savage, fierce Hyrcanian tiger. The sage stretched forth his wand, and with authoritative voice addressed the spectre: "Stay here, accursed wretch!" he said, "and tell me who thou art?"

"A spirit of the damned!" replied the spectre, trembling.

Sage. Hell, then, is fittest for thee! What business brings thee hither?

Spirit. To seek deliverance from its flames.

Sage. On what conditions hopest thou to attain this?

Spirit. None, none, alas! except my wife's forgiveness.

Sage. Is that thy only hope? Then back to hell—back to thy proper punishment—Away! fly! fly with thy infernal troop; nor ever more presume to violate the peace of this neighborhood. Behold yon mystic book, and tremble!

At these words the sage pointed to the opposite door of the dungeon: reluctantly the spectre bowed submission, and retreated. Instantly the vault appeared the second time in flames. Louder and more awful roared the thunder: all the doors fell to with horrible recoil: dreadful groans resounded in our ears: frightful apparitions glided along the walls, which, shaking with the deep-mouthed thunder, threatened us with immediate destruction.

A scene like this might well strike terror into the stoutest heart. We remained a long time in a state of stupefaction, from which we however gradually recovered, as the lightnings ceased to flash, and hoarse rebellious thunder abated its fury. The blue sulphureous flame no longer rolled itself down the stone staircase; darkness worse than Egyptian enveloped us around, hideous groans and lamentations rendering the gloomy silence of the place still more awful and tremendous.

These likewise gradually dying away, we were, if possible, still more terrified and alarmed by the hoarse music of the winding horn, and the dashing of horses' hoofs, which now resounded dreadfully in the echoing air. Roused by the well-known sound, from the state of insensibility in which we lay, we discoverd with horror our hopeless situation. Bewildered in a gloomy subteraneous dungeon, surrounded with impenetrable darkness, and nearly suffocated with a stong sulphureous vapor that pervaded the place, it tended not a little to aggravate the horror of the scene, that each of us, ignorant of the presence of the rest, supposed himself deserted and alone. Long time was it before I could recover sufficient fortitude to grope about me ; nor was I less perplexed which way to steer my doubtful course, than the mariner that tosses without compass on the boundless deep, whilst night invests the pole, and not a star is seen in the spacious firmament of heaven.

In this uncertainty I felt myself suddenly seized by the hand. Reason had not yet resumed her empire over my mind; my imagination was still too much heated with the strange scenes I had just witnessed, to form any cool deliberation; and fancying myself actually under the influence of enchantment, I started back with a fearful shriek, not less appalled than if the grisly king of terrors himself had laid his icy hand upon me!

"Don't be alarmed," exclaimed the well-known voice of the lieutenant; and instantly my fears fell, like a heavy stone, from my heart. At the same time, I had the pleasure to hear the count speak. We presently joined him, and, holding fast by the skirts of our coats, that we might not be separated again, endeavored to grope our way to the staircase.

In this design, after many fruitless attempts, we had at length the good fortune to succeed. Never did panting lover mount the staircase leading to the apartment of his mistress with greater alacrity than we displayed in climbing up these steps. But how shall I express the horror and disappointment we experienced on finding the trap-door fastened against us? The lieutenant, who on this as on all other occasions acted as our leader, after communicating this unwelcome intelligence, proposed that, instead of giving ourselves up for lost, we should try our united strength in forcing it open. Every nerve, accordingly, was strained to accomplish a purpose so devoutly to be wished, but all in vain ;—the door defied our utmost efforts.

Equally unsuccessful were we in our endeavors to make ourselves heard by the lieutenant's servant, whom we had left fast asleep in the hall on the arrival of the pilgrim, as related before. In vain did we exalt our voices, till our very throats were hoarse with bawling: in vain did echo repeat his name, in long reiterated peals, through the spacious untenanted apartments: in vain, with hands and knees, did we strike against the iron door, till the blood began to trickle down with the blows;—no pleasing sound of human footsteps saluted our longing ears.

"Deuce take the lazy rascal !"—exclaimed the lieutenant, tired with the double fatigue of bawling and thumping against the door—"I question whether the last trump itself would be powerful enough to arouse him ; and we may fairly roar our lungs out at this rate, without doing any manner of good. Rather let us sit down upon these steps, and listen till he begins to walk about in search of us, as no doubt he will do when he awakes, and finds us missing."

This advice was immediately put in execution ; though, for my own part, I must acknowledge that I had little hope of ever seeing the servant again. I judged it, however, prudent to conceal as much as possible my suspicions, and the lieutenant, likewise dissembling his anxiety, began to discourse upon the strange scenes we had just witnessed ; but, in spite of his utmost efforts, was not able to assume his wonted gaiety and unconcern. The count and myself made little or no reply, our thoughts being too much engrossed with the probable danger of our present situation: the lieutenant soon found it impossible to disguise his apprehensions any longer ; and in this miserable state of horror and alarm we continued, as nearly as I can guess, upwards of an hour, without exchanging a single word. Nothing but the gentle breath of respiration disturbed the gloomy silence that reigned around.

Thus things continued, till the natural impetuosity of the lieutenant could contain itself no longer ; wherefore, making a fresh attempt to engage us in conversation, he demanded, whether we were all in a league with his servant, and were sleeping for a wager? But though the agitation of our minds effectually repulsed the most distant advances of sleep, we were equally incapable of joining in discourse, and, urged by that strong propensity in human nature which renders man a genuine *Heautontimoroumenos*,* and inclines the mind to take a strange delight in tormenting itself, and brooding over its misfortunes and calamities, we still remained silent for nearly two hours longer, feasting our troubled thoughts with ideal and anticipated sorrows.

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* The name given to one of Terence's plays. The word is originally Greek, and signifies a *self-tormentor.*

"Damn me, if I hold it out any longer!" exclaimed the lieutenant, in a kind of frenzy, "that cursed rascal of mine can never sleep at such a devil of a rate as this. But were he even as fast as our great grandfather Adam when his precious rib was taken from his side, I think I'll manage to open his eyes for him."

With these words he began to stamp and roar, as though his design had actually been nothing less than to anticipate the day of general resurrection. The count and myself, seconding him with might and main in his pious intentions, joined lustily in the rough chorus—but all to no purpose; no answer was returned—no tread of footsteps could be heard. Exhausted with fatigue, we were fain to desist; and, once more seating ourselves upon the stone steps, our patience was again put to the test, in wating till the servant should think proper to awake.

After two or three hours spent in fruitless expectation—

"I should be very sorry, gentlemen," began the lieutenant, addressing us in a firm indignant tone of voice, "to torture either you or myself with groundless apprehensions. But, from the complexion of circumstances, our destruction in this dismal dungeon appears inevitable. As men, however, who have nothing worse than what already awaits us to dread, let us borrow hope and courage from despair; and rather let us perish in a bold attempt to regain our liberty, than calmly submit to a lingering death, which resolution and perseverance may still, perhaps, enable us to escape. Though this proud door defies our utmost and united efforts, some other opening may, perhaps, be found; at least, the chance, at any rate, is worth the trial."

Without waiting for our reply, the lieutenant began to descend the steps. We followed his example, and returned to the dismal dungeon from which we sought to escape. Each taking a different direction, we groped about in quest of some friendly avenue that might afford us egress.

In any other situation, the whimsical manner in which we frequently met together might well have excited our risibility. Sometimes we laid hold of each other by the feet and hands, or, running foul, came tumbling to the ground together. At other times, our noses met in rude contact with the opposing walls, or our shins were kicked bloody against the loose bricks, and rubbish that lay scattered up and down the place. But all our efforts proved abortive. Faint and exhausted, I at length stretched myself out upon the ground, and, more concerned about the safety of the count than my own, began to load myself with bitter reproaches, for having, through my indiscreet compliance, precipitated my pupil into inevitable ruin and destruction,—into the necessity of dying a lingering death in a subterraneous dungeon.

Meanwhile that I was indulging these disagreeable reflections, the lieutenant and count continued their researches, as I could easily distinguish by the sound of their feet, which echoed dreadfully through the dismal vault. Neither of them spoke a word, but groped about, for some time, in gloomy and profound silence. At length, the steps of one of my unhappy comrades ceased to be heard.

"Where are you both?" cried the lieutenant, greatly agitated and alarmed.

"For my part, I am here," was the reply;—"but where, pray, is the count?"

We both joined in calling after him, and roared out at least as loud and lustily as we had done some hours before in search of the lieutenant's servant. The count, however, returned no manner of answer. My fears and apprehensions for his safety were now doubly increased;—I was in a condition little short of positive distraction. Suddenly a hollow rattling noise was heard at some distance, and instantly a faint glimmering light began to diffuse itself in the corner of our dungeon.

Transported with this discovery, the lieutenant and myself directed our steps towards the place from whence the light seemed to proceed. We found, to our unspeakable joy, one of the iron doors of our prison open, through which we entered into a long passage, arched over with brick, at the extremity of which, at a considerable distance, appeared the welcome light of day. This passage led us by a gradual descent to a short flight of steps, opening into a spacious apartment, the flooring of which was broken through near the entrance; and through this aperture it was that the light issued. Looking down in hopes of making fresh discoveries, we saw with horror the count stretched at full length upon a heap of mouldering straw, to all appearance lifeless and insensible.

The height from which he had tumbled might be about fourteen feet, but, had it been double that number, I should not have hesitated a moment in jumping after him. The lieutenant followed my example, and, seizing the count by the arms, we began to shake him lustily with might and main, till he discovered symtoms of remaining life. Our joint endeavors soon restored him to a perfect possession of his faculties; when it appeared that, the fright excepted, he had sustained no material injury. From his relation we learnt, that having accidentally groped his way to the door on the left hand, and finding it yield to his push (most probably the lock had failed to fly back, at the time when the doors of the dungeon shut upon us, as related before), he continued to descend the passage, till, falling from the staircase upon the floor of the apartment to which it led, the rotten boards, not able to sustain his weight, had broken under him, and thereby precipitated him into the place where we now found him.

This place, from its present appearance, had most probably been used in former times for a stable. It had two round windows in the wall, secured with iron gratings, through which the light could barely find admission. We perceived a wooden door in one corner, against which we pushed with our united efforts, and presently the rotten boards fell tumbling in pieces at our feet.

A hollow subterraneous passage conducted us by a gradual ascent to a trap-door, which opened into the garden at the back of the castle. Our joy at once more beholding the welcome face of day is beyond the power of language to describe; we embraced each other with the most transporting ardor, and mutual congratulations on our narrow escape from the jaws of death; and, being already sufficiently acquainted with the walks of the garden, which we explored on our first visit to the castle, we easily regained the hall, where we had left the lieutenant's servant fast asleep the preceding night. Table and benches were still standing, but no signs of John could we possibly discover.

"The fellow, no doubt has made his escape to the inn!" was the lieutenant's opinion, after we had in vain made every apartment of the castle echo with his name. We accordingly posted back to the inn, thanking God that he had not punished our curiosity more severely, as we took our leave of the haunted castle.

On our arrival at the inn, we found our landlord encompassed with a whole troop of the inhabitants of the village, who it seems, had come to inquire after us; the ghosts having made such a horrible uproar in the place the preceding night, that they all, with one accord, gave us up for lost, and almost dreaded to inquire after our fate. Great, therefore, was their astonishment at seeing us enter so suddenly into their midst. Every one, as with common consent, put his hand to his hat, and reverently bade us welcome, falling foul upon us, at the same time, with an infinite multitude of questions relative to last night's adventures. This time, however, the lieutenant had little inclination to divert himself with practising upon their simplicity: his answers were short and unsatisfactory: turning round to the landlord, he endeavored to put an end to their impertinence by inquiring after his servant.

"I have seen nothing of him since yesterday," was the reply.

"Are the horses safe?" demanded the lieutenant.

"As safe and well as good stabling and the best of corn can make them: it is hardly ten minutes since I fed them myself."

With a look that sufficiently indicated his surprise and embarrassment, the lieutennant regarded us steadfastly all round; then addressing himself to the peasants, he offered them a handsome reward to explore the neighborhood in search of his servant. Every one testified his readiness to serve him, and eagerly sat out in the pursuit; but, after a long and fruitless search, they all returned with the unwelcome intelligence, that no traces of him were to be found.

As we had no hopes of seeing the lost fugitive any more, and were by no means willing to repeat our visits to the haunted castle, we resolved to pursue our journey immediately after dinner, and accordingly gave the necessary orders for our departure. At parting, our landlord and the peasants could not refrain from tears, so much were they prepossessed in our favor; we made them a decent present to drink our healths, and set off with the good wishes of the whole neighborhood.

The lieutenant being better acquainted with the Black For est than ourselves, undertook to lead the way: we followed his guidance, and soon cleared this terrible desert, without meeting with any fresh adventures. The following evening he took his leave of us, being in haste to rejoin the party to which he belonged. We parted with the utmost reluctance, and with mutual assurances of friendship and esteem. As he gave us his hand, "Accept, gentlemen (he began), my sincerest thanks for your faithful assistance and co-operation in encountering the most dreadful adventure I ever yet had occasion to experience in the whole course of my life. Should I ever be so fortunate as to obtain any further light respecting this intricate affair (and you may rest assured that I will exert my utmost endeavors to obtain satisfactory information, at some future period), I shall consider it my duty to communicate the particulars to you. On your side I request the same, in case you should be beforehand with me in your discoveries: meanwhile, accept of my best wishes, and whenever you call to mind the twenty-third of September, 1750, let the Danish lieutenant have a place likewise in your remembrance."

Founded on fact, and sanctioned by experience, it is to be hoped that this history will meet with a more favorable eception than exploded romances of giants and enchanters, than fairy tales or Persian fables; which, by being destitute of probability as well as truth, must prove insipid and disgusting to every reader of sentiment and taste. For, if any thing can give greater interest to a narrative, it is the conviction that such things have actually occurred.

THE FLYING DUTCHMAN.

Our ship, after touching at the Cape, went out again, and soon losing sight of the Table Mountain, began to be assailed by the impetuous attacks of the sea, which is well known to be more formidable there than in most parts of the known ocean. The day had grown dull and hazy, and the breeze, which had formerly blown fresh, now sometimes subsided almost entirely, and then recovering its strength, for a short time, and changing its direction, blew with temporary violence, and died away again, as if exercising a melancholy caprice. A heavy swell began to come from the south-east. Our sails flapped against the masts, and the ship rolled from side to side, as heavily as if she had been water-logged. There was so little wind that she would not steer.

At two P. M. we had a squall, accompanied by thunder and rain. The seamen, growing restless, looked anxiously a-head. They said we would have a dirty night of it, and that it would not be worth while to turn into their hammocks. As the second mate was describing a gale he had encountered off Cape Race, Newfoundland, we were suddenly taken all a-back, and the blast came upon us furiously. We continued to scud under a double reefed mainsail and foretop-sail till dusk; but, as the sea ran high, the Captain thought it safest to bring her to.—The watch on deck consisted of four men, one of whom was appointed to keep a look-out a-head, for the weather was so hazy, that we could not see two cables' length from the bows.—This man, whose name was Tom Willis, went frequently to the bows, as if to observe something; and when the others called to him, inquiring what he was looking at, he would give no definite answer. They therefore went also to the bows, and appeared startled, and at first said nothing; but presently one of them cried, "William, go call the watch."

The seamen, having been asleep in their hammocks, murmured at this unreasonable summons, and called to know how it looked upon deck. To which Tom Willis replied, "Come up and see. What we are minding is not on deck, but a-head."

On hearing this, they ran up without putting on their jackets, and when they came to the bows, there was a whispering.

One of them asked, "Where is she? I do not see her."

To which another replied, "The last flash of lightning showed there was not a reef in one of her sails; but we, who know her history, know that all her canvas will never carry her into port."

By this time the talking of the seamen had brought some of the passengers on deck. They could see nothing, however, for the ship was surrounded by thick darkness, and by the noise of the dashing waters, and the seamen evaded the questions that were put to them.

At this juncture the chaplain came on deck. He was a man of grave and modest demeanour, and was much liked among the seamen, who called him Gentle George. He overheard one of the men asking another, "If he had ever seen the Flying Dutchman before, and if he knew the story about her?" To which the other replied, "I have heard of her beating about in these seas. What is the reason she never reaches port?"

The first speaker replied, "They give different reasons for it, but my story is this: 'She was an Amsterdam vessel, and sailed from that port seventy years ago. Her master's name was Vanderdecken. He was a stanch seaman, and would have his own way, in spite of the devil. For all that, never a sailor under him had reason to complain; though how it is on board with them now, nobody knows. The story is this: that in doubling the Cape, they were a long day trying to weather the Table Bay, which we saw this morning. However, the wind headed them, and went against them more and more, and Vanderdecken walked the deck, swearing at the wind. Just after sunset, a vessel spoke him, asking if he did not mean to go into the bay that night. Vanderdecken replied, 'May I be eternally d——d if I do, though I should beat about here till the day of judgment!' And to be sure, Vanderdecken never did go into that bay; for it is believed that he continues to beat about in these seas still, and will do so long enough. This vessel is never seen but with foul weather along with her.'"

To which another replied, "We must keep clear of her.—They say that her Captain mans his jolly boat, when a vessel comes in sight, and tries hard to get along-side, to put letters on board, but no good comes to them who have communication with him.

Tom Willis said, "There is such a sea between us at present, as should keep us safe from such visits."

To which the other answered; "We cannot trust to that if Vanderdecken sends out his men."

Some of this conversation having been overheard by the passengers, there was a commotion among them. In the mean time, the noise of the waves against the vessel could scarcely be distinguished from the sounds of the distant thunder. The wind had extinguished the light in the binnacle, where the compass was, and no one could tell which way the ship's head lay. The passengers were afraid to ask questions, lest they should augment the secret sensation of fear which chilled every heart, or learn any more than they already knew. For while they attributed their agitation of mind to the state of the weather, it was sufficiently perceptible that their alarms also arose from a cause which they did not acknowledge.

The lamp at the binnacle being re-lighted, they perceived that the ship lay closer to the wind than she had hitherto done, and the spirits of the passengers were somewhat revived.

Nevertheless, neither the tempestuous state of the atmosphere nor the thunder had ceased; and soon a vivid flash of lightning showed the waves tumbling around, and, in the distance, the Flying Dutchman scudding furiously before the wind, under a press of canvas. The sight was but momentary, but it was sufficient to remove all doubt from the minds of the passengers. One of the men cried aloud, "There she goes, top-gallants and all."

The chaplain had brought up his prayer-book, in order that he might draw from thence something to fortify and tranquilize the minds of the rest. Therefore, taking his seat near the binnacle, so that the light shone upon the white leaves of the book, he, in a solemn tone, read out the service for those distressed at sea. The sailors stood round with folded arms, and looked as if they thought it would be of little use. But this served to occupy the attention of those on deck for a while.

In the mean time, the flashes of lightning becoming less vivid, showed nothing else, far or near, but the billows waltering round the vessel. The sailors seemed to think that they had not yet seen the worst, but confined their remarks and prognostications to their own circle.

At this time, the Captain, who had hitherto remained in his birth, came on deck, and with a gay and unconcerned air inquired what was the cause of the general dread. He said he thought they had already seen the worst of the weather, and wondered that his men had raised such a hubbub about a cap full of wind. Mention being made of the Flying Dutchman, the Captain laughed. He said, "he would like very much to see any vessel carrying top-gallant sails in such a night, for it would be a sight worth looking at." The chaplain, taking him by one of the buttons of his coat, drew him aside, and appeared to enter into serious conversation with him.

While they were talking together, the Captain was heard to say, "Let us look to our own ship, and not mind such things;" and accordingly, he sent a man aloft, to see if all was right about the fore-topsail yard, which was chafing the mast with a loud noise.

It was Tom Willis who went up; and when he came down, he said that all was tight, and that he hoped it would soon be clearer ; and that they would see no more of what they were most afraid of.

The Captain and first mate were heard laughing loudly together, while the chaplain observed, that it would be better to repress such unseasonable gaiety. The second mate, a native of Scotland, whose name was Duncan Saunderson, having attended one of the University classes at Aberdeen, thought himself too wise to believe all that the sailors said, and took part with the Captain. He jestingly told Tom Willis to borrow his grandam's spectacles the next time he was sent to keep a look-out a-head. Tom walked sulkily away, muttering that he would nevertheless trust to his own eyes till morning, and accordingly took his station at the bow, and appeared to watch as attentively as before.

The sound of talking soon ceased, for many returned to their births, and we heard nothing but the clanking of ropes upon the masts, and the bursting of the billows a-head, as the vessel successively took the seas.

But after a considerable interval of darkness, gleams of lightning began to re-appear. Tom Willis suddenly called out, "Vanderdecken, again ! Vanderdecken, again ! I see them letting down a boat."

All who were on deck ran to the bows. The next flash of lightning shone far and wide over the raging sea, and showed us not only the Flying Dutchman at a distance, but also a boat coming from her with four men. The boat was within two cables' length of our ship's side.

The man who first saw her ran to the Captain, and asked whether they should hail her or not. The Captain, walking about in great agitation, made no reply. The first mate cried, "Who's going to heave a rope to that boat ?" The men looked at each other, without offering to do any thing. The boat had come very near the chains, when Tom Willis called out, 'What do you want ? or what devil has blown you here in such weather?' A piercing voice from the boat replied in English, "We want to speak with your Captain." The Captain took no notice of this, and Vanderdecken's boat having come close along side, one of the men came upon deck, and appeared like a fatigued and weather-beaten seaman, holding some letters in his hand.

Our sailors all drew back. The chaplain, however, looking steadfastly upon him, went forward a few steps, and asked, "What is the purpose of this visit ?"

The stranger replied, "We have long been kept here by foul weather, and Vanderdecken wishes to send these letters to his friends, in Europe."

Our Captain now came forward, and said as firmly as he could, "I wish Vanderdecken would put his letters on board of any other vessel rather than mine."

The stranger replied, "We have tried many a ship, but most of them refuse our letters."

Upon which, Tom Willis muttered, "It will be best for us if we do the same, for they say there is sometimes a sinking weight in your paper."

The stranger took no notice of this, but asked where we were from. On being told that we were from Portsmouth, he said, as if with strong feeling, "Would that you had rather been from Amsterdam! Oh that we saw it again!—we must see our friends again." When he uttered these words, the men who were in the boat below wrung their hands, and cried in a piercing tone, in Dutch, "Oh that we saw it again! We have been long here beating about: but we must see our friends again!"

The chaplain asked the stranger, "How long have you been at sea?"

He replied, "We have lost our count; for our almanack was blown overboard. Our ship, you see, is there still; so why should you ask how long we have been at sea? for Vanderdecken only wishes to write home and comfort his friends."

To which the chaplain replied, "Your letters, I fear would be of no use in Amsterdam, even if they were delivered, for the persons to whom they were addressed are probably no longer to be found there, except under very ancient green turf in the church-yard."

The unwelcome stranger then wrung his hands, and appeared to weep; and replied, "It is impossible. We cannot believe you. We have been long driving about here, but country nor relations cannot be so easily forgotten. There is not a raindrop in the air but feels itself kindred to all the rest, and they fall back into the sea to meet with each other again. How, then, can kindred blood be made to forget where it came from? Even our bodies are part of the ground of Holland; and Vanderdecken says, if he once were come to Amsterdam, he would rather be changed into a stone post, well fixed into the ground, than leave it again, if that were to die elsewhere. But in the mean time, we only ask you to take these letters."

The chaplain, looking at him with astonishment, said, "This is the insanity of natural affection, which rebels against all measures of time and distance."

The stranger continued, "Here is a letter from our second mate, to his dear and only remaining friend, his uncle, the merchant who lives in the second house on Stuncken Yacht Quay."

He held forth the letter, but no one would approach to take it.

Tom Willis raised his voice and said, "One of our men, here, says that he was in Amsterdam last summer, and he knows for certain that the street called Stuncken Yacht Quay was pulled down sixty years ago, and now there is only a large church at that place."

The man from the Flying Dutchman said, "It is impossible; we cannot believe you. Here is another letter from myself, in which I have sent a bank-note to my dear sister, to buy some gallant lace, to make her a high head-dress."

Tom Willis hearing this, said, "It is most likely that her head now lies under a tombstone, which will outlast all the changes of the fashion. But on what house is your bank-note?"

The stranger replied, "On the house of Vanderbrucker and Company."

The man of whom Tom Willis had spoken said, "I guess there will now be some discount upon it, for that banking-house was gone to destruction forty years ago; and Vanderbrucker was afterwards missing. But to remember these things is like raking up the bottom of an old canal."

The stranger called out passionately, "It is impossible—we cannot believe it! It is cruel to say such things to people in our condition. There is a letter from our captain himself, to his much beloved and faithful wife, whom he left at a pleasant summer dwelling, on the border of the Haarlemer Mer. She promised to have the house beautifully painted and gilded before he came back, and to get a new set of looking glasses for the principal chamber, that she might see as many images of Vanderdecken as if she had six husbands at once."

The man replied, "There has been time enough for her to have had six husbands since then; but were she alive still, there is no fear that Vanderdecken would ever get home to disturb her."

On hearing this, the stranger again shed tears, and said, if they would not take the letters, he would leave them; and looking round, he offered the parcel to the captain, chaplain, and to the rest of the crew successively: but each drew back as it was offered, and put his hands behind his back. He then laid the letters upon the deck, and placed upon them a piece of iron, which was lying near, to prevent them from being blown away. Having done this, he swung himself over the gang-way, and went into the boat.

We heard the others speak to him, but the rise of a sudden squall prevented us from distinguishing his reply. The boat was seen to quit the ship's side, and, in a few moments, there were no more traces of her than if she had never been there.—The sailors rubbed their eyes, as if doubting what they had witnessed; but the parcel still lay upon the deck, and proved the reality of all that had passed.

Duncan Saunderson, the Scotch mate, asked the captain if he should take them up, and put them in the letter-bag? Receiving no reply, he would have lifted them if it had not been for Tom Willis, who pulled him back, saying that nobody should touch them.

In the mean time, the captain went down to the cabin, and the chaplain having followed him, found him at his bottle-case, pouring out a large dram of brandy. The captain, although somewhat disconcerted, immediately offered the glass to him, saying, "Here, Charters, is what is good in a cold night." The chaplain declined drinking any thing, and the captain having swallowed the bumper, they both returned to the deck, where they found the seamen giving their opinions concerning what should be done with the letters. Tom Willis proposed to pick them up on a harpoon, and throw it overboard.

Another speaker said, "I have always heard it asserted, that it is neither safe to accept them voluntarily, nor, when they are left, to throw them out of the ship."

"Let no one touch them," said the carpenter. "The way to do with these letters from the Flying Dutchman is to case them upon deck, by nailing boards over them, so that if he sends back for them, they are still there to give him."

The carpenter went to fetch his tools. During his absence the ship gave so violent a pitch, that the piece of iron slid off the letters, and they were whirled overboard by the wind, like birds of evil omen whirling through the air. There was a cry of joy among the sailors, and they ascribed the favourable change which soon took place in the weather to our having got quit of Vanderdecken. We soon got under weigh again. The night watch being set, the rest of the crew retired to their births.

THE TIGER'S CAVE.

About three years since, after a short residence in Mexico, I embarked for Guayaquil, in order to visit from thence the celebrated mountains of Quito. On arriving at Guayaquil, I found there two travellers, who were preparing to take the same route. These were Capt. Wharton, an English naval officer; and a young midshipman, named Lincoln. The frigate which Wharton commanded had suffered considerably in her voyage through the South Seas ; and as it was now undergoing the necessary repairs, Wharton resolved to devote some of his leisure time to visiting the forests and mountains of Quito. It was quickly agreed that we should make the journey together. I found Wharton a frank and open-hearted man ; and his young favorite, Lincoln, a youth of eighteen, had a handsome sun-burnt countenance, with an expression of determined bravery.

We set out on a fine clear morning, attended by my huntsman, Frank, and two Indians, as guides. On beginning to ascend the mountain, the scenery became more enchanting at every step. The mighty Andes, like a vast amphitheatre, covered to their summits with gigantic forests, towered aloft ; the snow-crested Chimborazo reared its proud front ; the terrific Cotopaxi sent forth volumes of smoke and flame ; and innumerable other mountains, branching from the far-spreading Cordilleras, faded away in the distance. With an involuntary shudder, I entered the narrow path that leads into the magnificent forest. The monkies leaped from branch to branch ; the paroquets chattered incessantly ; and the eagles, from amidst the tall cypresses where they had built their nests, sent down a wild cry. The farther we advanced, new objects presented themselves on every side : the stately palms, with their broad sword-like leaves ; the singular soap-tree ; the splendid mongolia ; the tall wax tree, and the evergreen oak, reared themselves proudly over the orange groves, with whose fragrance was blended the aromatic perfume of the vanilla.

Towards evening, our guides began to quicken their pace, and we hastened after them. In a short time, they uttered a shout of joy, of which we quickly discovered the cause. By the light of a large fire, which was kindled in an open space of the forest, we descried a little Indian village, consisting of several huts erected on trunks of trees, and to which were appended ladders of reeds. The Indian who was employed in replenishing the fire, answered the cry of our guides in a similar tone; and, after a short conference, we were conducted into one of the huts, where we passed the night.

Early in the morning, we again resumed our way through the deep shade of the forest, and in due time stopped to enjoy a repast under a broad-leaved palm. Suddenly, one of the Indians motioned us to be silent, and bending his ear to the ground, appeared to be listening to some sound, which, however, was unheard by us. We paused, and attentively watched his motions. In a few minutes he arose, and beckoned us to follow him into the forest: he stopped often, and laid his ear to the ground, and shortly after we heard a female voice shrieking for help. We hurried on, with difficulty restraining our young midshipman from advancing before the rest of the party; and had proceeded but a short way when the shriek was repeated close beside us. We stopped on a motion from our guides, who, parting gently the intervening boughs, gave to view a scene which caused us hastily to grasp our arms.

In an open space blazed a large fire, round which were seated several men in tattered uniforms: they were armed, and appeared to be holding a consultation regarding a beautiful Indian girl, who was bound with cords to a tree. The Indians prepared their bows and arrows; but we beckoned them to desist, until we gave the signal of attack. On the termination of the conference, one of the men approached the girl, and said, " So, you will not conduct us to your village ?"—" No," answered the young Indian, firmly, but sobbing. " Good child !" he replied, with a scornful laugh, " so you will not be persuaded to lead us to your hut ?"—" No," she again replied. " We shall see how long the bird will sing to this tune ;"—and with these words, the ruffian snatched a brand from the fire, and again approached her. We hastened to get ready our guns; but the impetuosity of Lincoln could not be restrained, and casting his from him, he sprung forward just as the brand had touched the shoulder of the girl, and struck the villain lifeless to the earth. At the same instant, the Indian arrows whistled through the air and wounded two of the others, but not, it appeared, dangerously, as they fled with their terrified comrades.

Our midshipman, meanwhile, had unbound the girl, who, the instant she was free, knelt before him, and poured out her gratitude in the most impassioned language. We learned that her name was Yanna, and that her parents dwelt in a village in one of the deepest recesses of the forest—that she had left her home early in the morning to gather cocoa—and that, having strayed too far, she had suddenly found herself surrounded by the ruffians from whom we had just rescued her, and who had endeavoured, by threats and violence, to force her to guide them to the village. We could not withstand her prayers to accompany her home. There we were quickly surrounded by the Indians, whom we found to possess an almost European fairness of complexion. Yanna immediately ran up to her parents, who were chiefs of the tribe, and spoke to them with animation, using all the while the most impressive gestures. As soon as she had finished her narrative, her parents hastened forward, and kneeling before us, kissed our hands with expressions of the deepest gratitude ; and the whole of the tribe knelt along with them, pouring forth mingled thanks and blessings. Then on a sudden they started up, and seizing us, they bore us in triumph to the hut of the chief, where we were treated with the utmost hospitality. Wharton smiled to me as he remarked, that our young midshipman and Yanna had disappeared together.—Shortly after, Yanna returned, holding Lincoln with one hand, and carrying in the other a chaplet of flowers, which she immediately placed on his head. On the following morning we again set out, and as we parted, the beautiful eyes of Yanna were filled with tears.

On leaving the village, we continued to wind round Chimborazo's wide base ; but its snowy head no longer shone above us in clear brilliancy, for a dense fog was gradually gathering round it. Our guides looked anxiously towards it, and announced their apprehensions of a violent storm. We soon found that their fears were well-founded. The fog rapidly covered and obscured the whole of the mountain ; the atmosphere was suffocating, and yet so humid that the steel-work of our watches was covered with rust, and the watches stopped. The river beside which we were travelling rushed down with still greater impetuosity ; and from the clefts of the rocks which lay on the left of our path, were suddenly precipitated small rivulets, that bore the roots of trees, and innumerable serpents, along with them. These rivulets often came down so suddenly and so violently, that we had great difficulty in preserving our footing.—The thunder at length began to roll, and resounded through the mountainous passes. Then came the lightning, flash following flash—above, around, beneath—every where a sheet of fire.—We sought a temporary shelter in a cleft of the rocks, whilst one of our guides hastened forward to seek a more secure asylum. In a short time, he returned ; he had discovered a spacious cavern. We proceeded thither immediately, and with great difficulty, and not a little danger, at last got into it.

The noise and raging of the storm continued with so much violence, that we could not hear the sound of our own voices. I had placed myself near the entrance of the cave, and could observe, through the opening, which was straight and narrow, the singular scene without. The highest cedar-trees were struck down, or bent like reeds; monkeys and parrots lay strewed upon the ground, killed by the falling branches; the water had collected in the path we had just passed, and hurried along it like a mountain stream. When the storm had somewhat abated, our guides ventured out in order to ascertain if it were possible to continue our journey. The cave in which we had taken refuge was so extremely dark, that, if we moved a few paces from the entrance, we could not see an inch before us; and we were debating as to the propriety of leaving it even before the Indians came back, when we suddenly heard a singular groaning or growling in the farther end of the cavern, which instantly fixed all our attention. Wharton and myself listened anxiously; but our daring and inconsiderate young friend, Lincoln, together with my huntsman, crept about upon their hands and knees, and endeavored to discover, by groping, from whence the sound proceeded. They had not advanced far into the cavern, before we heard them utter an exclamation of surprise; and they returned to us, each carrying in his arms an animal singularly marked, and about the size of a cat, seemingly of great strength and power. Wharton had scarcely glanced at them, when he exclaimed in consternation, "Good God! we have come into a den of ———" He was interrupted by a fearful cry of dismay from our guides, who came rushing precipitately towards us, crying out, "A tiger!"—and, at the same time, with extraordinary rapidity, they climbed up a cedar tree, which stood at the entrance of the cave, and hid themselves among the branches.

After the first sensation of horror and surprise, which rendered me motionless for a moment, had subsided, I grasped my fire-arms. Wharton had already regained his composure and self-possession; and he called to us to assist him instantly in blocking up the mouth of the cave with an immense stone, which fortunately lay near it. The sense of approaching danger augmented our strength; for we now distinctly heard the growl of the ferocious animal, and we were lost beyond redemption if it reached the entrance before we could get it closed.—Ere this was done, we could distinctly see the tiger bounding towards the spot, and stooping in order to creep into his den by the narrow opening. At this fearful moment our exertions were successful, and the great stone kept the wild beast at bay.—There was a small open space, however, left between the top of the entrance and the stone, through which we could see the head of the animal, illuminated by its glowing eyes, which it rolled, glaring with fury, upon us. Its frightful roaring, too, penetrated to the depths of the cavern, and was answered by the hoarse growling of the cubs, which Lincoln and Frank had now tossed from them. Our ferocious enemy attempted first to remove the stone with his powerful claws, and then to push it with his head from its place; and these efforts, proving abortive, served only to increase his wrath. He uttered a frightful howl, and his flaming eyes darted light into the darkness of our retreat.

"Now is the time to fire at him!" said Wharton, with his usual calmness; "aim at his eyes; the ball will go through his brain, and we shall then have a chance to get rid of him."

Frank seized his double-barreled gun, and Lincoln his pistols. The former placed the muzzle within a few inches of the tiger, and Lincoln did the same. At Wharton's command, they both drew the triggers at the same moment; but no shot followed. The tiger, who seemed aware that the flash indicated an attack upon him, sprang, growling, from the entrance; but feeling himself unhurt, immediately turned back again, and stationed himself in his former place. The powder in both pieces was wet; they, therefore, proceeded to draw the useless loading, whilst Wharton and myself hastened to seek our powder-flask. It was so extremely dark, that we were obliged to grope about the cave; and at last, coming in contact with the cubs, we heard a rustling noise, as if they were playing with some metal substance, which we soon discovered was the cannister we were looking for. Most unfortunately, however, the animals had pushed off the lid with their claws, and the powder had been strewed over the damp earth, and rendered entirely useless. This discovery excited the greatest consternation.

"All is over now," said Wharton; "we have only to choose whether we shall die of hunger, or open the entrance to the blood-thirsty monster without, and so make a quicker end of the matter."

So saying, he placed himself close behind the stone which for the moment defended us, and looked undauntedly upon the lightning eyes of the tiger. Lincoln raved and swore; and Frank took a piece of strong cord from his pocket, and hastened to the farther end of the cave, I knew not with what design. We soon, however, heard a low stifled groaning; and the tiger, who heard it also, became more restless and disturbed than ever. He went backwards and forwards before the entrance of the cave in the most wild and impetuous manner, then stood still, and stretching out his neck in the direction of the forest, broke forth into a deafening howl. Our two Indian guides took advantage of this opportunity to discharge several arrows from the tree. He was struck more than once; but the light weapons bounded back harmless from his thick skin. At length, however, one of them struck him near the eye, and the arrow remained sticking in the wound. He now broke anew into the wildest fury, sprang at the tree and tore it with his claws. But having at length succeeded in getting rid of the arrow, he became more calm, and laid himself down as before in front of the cave.

Frank now returned from the lower end of the den, and a glance showed us what he had been doing. He had strangled the two cubs; and before we were aware of his intention, he threw them through the opening to the tiger. No sooner did the animal perceive them than he gazed earnestly upon them, and began to examine them closely, turning them cautiously from side to side. As soon as he became aware that they were dead, he uttered so piercing a howl of sorrow, that we were obliged to put our hands to our ears. When I censured my huntsman for the rashness and cruelty of the action, I perceived by his blunt and abrupt answers that he also had lost all hope of rescue, and with it all sense of the ties between master and servant.

The thunder had now ceased, and the storm had sunk to a gentle gale; we could hear the songs of birds in the neighboring forest, and the sun was streaming among the branches. The contrast only made our situation the more horrible. The tiger had laid himself down beside his whelps. He was a beautiful animal, of great size and strength, and his limbs being stretched out at their full length, displayed his immense power of muscle. All at once another roar was heard at a distance, and the tiger immediately rose and answered it with a mournful howl.—At the same instant our Indians uttered a shriek, which announced that some new danger threatened us. A few moments confirmed our worst fears, for another tiger, not quite so large as the former, came rapidly towards the spot where we were.—"This enemy will prove more cruel than the other," said Wharton; "for this is the female, and she knows no pity for those who deprive her of her young."

The howls which the tigress gave, when she had examined the bodies of her cubs, surpassed every conception of the horrible that can be formed; and the tiger mingled his mournful cries with hers. Suddenly her roaring was lowered to a hoarse growling, and we saw her anxiously stretch out her head, extend her nostrils, and look round, as if in search of the murderers of her young. Her eyes quickly fell upon us, and she made a spring forward with the intention of penetrating to our place of safety. Perhaps she might have been enabled by her immense strength to push away the stone, had we not, with all our united power, held it against her. When she found that all her efforts were fruitless, she approached the tiger who lay stretched out beside his cubs, and he rose and joined in her hollow roaring. They stood together for a few moments as if in consultation, and then suddenly went off at a rapid pace, and disappeared from our sight. Their howling died away in the distance, and then entirely ceased. We now began to entertain better hopes of our condition; but Wharton shook his head —"Do not flatter yourselves," said he, "with the belief that these animals will let us escape out of their sight till they have had their revenge. The hours we have to live are numbered."

Nevertheless, there still appeared a chance of our rescue, for, to our surprise, we saw both our Indians standing before the entrance, and heard them call to us to seize the only possibility of flight, for that the tigers had gone round the height, possibly to seek another inlet to the cave. In the greatest haste the stone was pushed aside, and we stepped forth from what we had considered a living grave. Wharton was the last who left it; he was unwilling to lose his double-barreled gun, and stopped to take it up; the rest of us thought only of making our escape. We now heard once more the roaring of the tigers, though at a distance; and following the examples of our guides, we precipitately struck into a side path. From the number of roots and branches of trees with which the storm had strewed our way, and the slipperiness of the road, our flight was slow and difficult.

We had proceeded thus for about a quarter of an hour, when we found that our way led along the edge of a rocky cliff with innumerable fissures. We had just entered upon it, when suddenly the Indians, who were before us, uttered one of their piercing shrieks, and we immediately became aware that the tigers were in pursuit of us. Urged by despair, we rushed towards one of the breaks or gulfs in our way, over which was thrown a bridge of reeds, that sprung up and down at every step, and could be trod with safety by the light foot of the Indians alone. Deep in the hollow below rushed an impetuous stream, and a thousand pointed and jagged rocks threatened destruction on every side. Lincoln, my huntsman, and myself, passed over the chasm in safety; but Wharton was still in the middle of the waving bridge, and endeavoring to steady himself, when both the tigers were seen to issue from the adjoining forest; and the moment they descried us they bounded towards us with dreadful roarings. Meanwhile Wharton had nearly gained the safe side of the gulf, and we were all clambering up the rocky cliff except Lincoln, who remained at the reedy bridge to assist his friend to step upon the firm ground. Wharton, though the ferocious animals were close upon him, never lost his courage or presence of mind. As soon as he had gained the edge of the cliff he knelt down, and with his sword divided the fastenings by which the bridge was attached to the rock. He expected that an effectual barrier would thus be put to the further progress of our pursuers; but he was mistaken, for he had scarcely accomplished his task, when the tigress, without a moment's pause, rushed towards the chasm, and attempted to bound over it. It was a fearful sight to see the mighty animal for a moment in the air above the abyss; but her strength was not equal to the distance—she fell into the gulf, and before she reached the bottom she was torn into a thousand pieces by the jagged points of the rocks. Her fate did not in the least dismay her companion,—he followed her with an immense spring, and reached the opposite side, but only with his fore claws; and thus he clung to the edge of the precipice, endeavoring to gain a footing. The Indians again uttered a wild shriek, as if all hope had been lost. But Wharton, who was nearest the edge of the rock, advanced courageously towards the tiger and struck his sword into the animal's breast. Maddened with pain, the furious beast collected all his strength, and fixing one of his hind legs upon the edge of the cliff, he seized Wharton by the thigh. The heroic man still preserved his fortitude; he grasped the stem of a tree with his left hand, to steady and support himself, while with his right he wrenched, and violently turned the sword that was still in the breast of the tiger. All this was the work of an instant. The Indians, Frank, and myself, hastened to his assistance; but Lincoln, who was already at his side, had seized Wharton's gun, which lay near upon the ground, and struck so powerful a blow with the butt end upon the head of the tiger, that the animal, stunned and overpowered, let go his hold and fell back into the abyss. The unhappy Lincoln, however, had not calculated upon the force of his blow: he staggered forward, reeled upon the edge of the precipice, extended his hand to seize upon any thing to save himself—but in vain. For an instant he hovered over the gulf, and then fell into it, to rise no more.

We gave vent to a shriek of horror—then for a few minutes there was a dead and awful silence. When we were able to revert to our own condition, I found Wharton lying insensible on the brink of the precipice. We examined his wound, and found that he was torn dreadfully. The Indians collected some herbs, the application of which stopped the bleeding, and we then bound up the mangled limb. It was now evening, and we were obliged to resolve upon passing the night under the shelter of some cleft in the rocks. The Indians made a fire to keep the wild beasts from our couch; but no sleep visited my eyes. I sat at Wharton's bed and listened to his deep breathing. It became more and more hard and deep, and his hand grasped violently, as if in convulsive movements. His consciousness had not returned, and in this situation he passed the whole night. In the morning the Indians proposed to bear our wounded friend back to the village we had left the previous day. They plaited some strong branches together, and formed a bridge to repass the gulf. It was a mournful procession. On the way Wharton suddenly opened his eyes, but instantly closed them again, and lay as immoveable as before. Towards evening we drew near our destination; and our Indian friends, when they saw our situation, expressed the deepest sympathy; the whole tribe assembled round us, and uttered piercing cries of grief when they learnt poor Lincoln's fate. Yanna burst into tears ; and her brothers hastened away, accompanied by some other Indians, in search of the body. I remained with my wounded friend ; he still lay insensible to every thing around him. Sleep at length overpowered me. Towards morning, a song of lamentation and mourning aroused me—it was from the Indians, who were returning with Lincoln's body. Yanna was weeping beside it. I hastened to meet them, but was glad to turn back again, when my eyes fell upon the torn and lifeless body of our young companion. The Indians had laid him upon tiger's skins, which they had strewed with green boughs ; and they now bore him to the burial-place of their tribe. Yanna sacrificed on his tomb the most beautiful ornament she possessed—her long black hair—an offering upon the grave of him who, it is possible, had first awakened the feelings of tenderness in her innocent bosom.

On the third day, as I sat at Wharton's bed, he suddenly moved ; he raised his head, and opening his eyes, gazed fixedly upon a corner of the room. His countenance changed in a most extraordinary manner ; it was deadly pale, and seemed to be turning to marble. I saw that the hand of death was upon him. "All is over," he gasped out, while his looks continued fixed upon the same spot ; "there it stands !"—and he fell back and expired.

PETER RUGG, THE MISSING MAN.

Sir,—Agreeably to my promise, I now relate to you all the particulars of the lost man and child, which I have been able to collect. It is entirely owing to the humane interest you seemed to take in the report, that I have pursued the inquiry to the following result.

You may remember that business called me to Boston in the summer of 1820. I sailed in the packet to Providence, and when I arrived there, I learned that every seat in the stage was engaged. I was thus obliged either to wait a few hours, or accept a seat with the driver, who civilly offered me that accommodation. Accordingly I took my seat by his side, and soon found him intelligent and communicative. When we had travelled about ten miles, the horses suddenly threw their ears on their necks, as flat as a hare's. Said the driver, have you a surtout with you? "No," said I, "why do you ask?" "You will want one soon," said he.. "Do you observe the ears of all the horses?" "Yes," and was just about to ask the reason.—"They see the storm breeder, and we shall see him soon." At this moment there was not a cloud visible in the firmament.—Soon after a small speck appeared in the road. "There," said my companion, "comes the storm breeder; he always leaves a Scotch mist behind him. By many a wet jacket I do remember him. I suppose the poor fellow suffers much himself, much more than is known to the world." Presently a man with a child beside him, with a large black horse, and a weather-beaten chair, once built for a chaise body, passed in great haste, apparently at the rate of twelve miles an hour. He seemed to grasp the rein of his horse with firmness, and appeared to anticipate his speed. He seemed dejected, and looked anxiously at the passengers, particularly at the stage driver and myself.—In a moment after he passed us, the horses' ears were up, and bent themselves forward so that they nearly met. "Who is that man," said I, "he seems in great trouble." "Nobody knows who he is, but his person and the child are familiar to me. I have met him more than a hundred times, and have been so often asked the way to Boston, by that man, even when he was travelling directly from that town, that of late, I have refused any communication with him; and that is the reason he gave me such a fixed look." "But does he never stop any where?"—"I have never known him to stop any where, longer than to inquire the way to Boston; and let him be where he may, he will tell you he cannot stay a moment, for he must reach Boston that night."

We were now ascending a high hill in Walpole; and as we had a fair view of the heavens, I was rather disposed to jeer the driver for thinking of his surtout, as not a cloud as big as a marble, could be discerned. "Do you look," said he, "in the direction whence the man came, that is the place to look; the storm never meets him, it follows him." We presently approached another hill, and when at the height, the driver pointed out in an eastern direction a little black speck, about as big as a hat. "There said he is the seed storm; we may possibly reach Polley's before it reaches us, but the wanderer and his child will go to Providence through rain, thunder and lightning." And now the horses, as though taught by instinct, hastened with increased speed. The little black cloud came on rolling over the turnpike, and doubled and trebled itself in all directions. The appearance of this cloud attracted the notice of all the passengers; for after it had spread itself to a great bulk, it suddenly became more limited in circumference, grew more compact, dark and consolidated. And now the successive flashes of chain lightning caused the whole cloud to appear like a sort of irregular net work, and displayed a thousand fantastic images. The driver bespoke my attention to a remarkable configuration in the cloud. He said every flash of lightning near its centre discovered to him distinctly the form of a man sitting in an open carriage drawn by a black horse. But in truth, I saw no such thing. The man's fancy was doubtless at fault.—It is a very common thing for the imagination to paint for the senses, both in the visible and invisible world.

In the mean time the distant thunder gave notice of a shower at hand; and just as we reached Polley's tavern, the rain poured down in torrents. It was soon over, the cloud passing in the direction of the turnpike toward Providence. In a few moments after, a respectable looking man in a chaise stopped at the door. The man and child in the chair having excited some little sympathy among the passengers, the gentleman was asked if he had observed them? He said he had met them, that the man seemed bewildered, and inquired the way to Boston: that he was driving at great speed, as though he expected to outstrip the tempest; that the moment he had passed him, a thunder clap broke distinctly over the man's head, and seemed to envelop both man and child, horse and carriage. "I stopped," said the gentleman, "supposing the lightning had struck him, but the horse only seemed to loom up and increase his speed, and as well as I could judge, he travelled just as fast as the thunder cloud."—While this man was speaking, a pedlar with a cart of tin merchandize came up, all dripping; and on being questioned, he said he had met that man and carriage, within a fortnight, in four different states; that at each time he had inquired the way to Boston, and that a thunder shower like the present had each time deluged his wagon and his wares, setting his tin pots, &c. afloat, so that he had determined to get marine insurance done for the future. But that which excited his surprise most, was the strange conduct of his horse, for that long before he could distinguish the man in the chair, his own horse stood still in the road, and flung back his ears." "In short," said the pedlar, "I wish never to see that man and horse again; they do not look to me as though they belonged to this world."

This is all that I could learn at that time; and the occurrence soon after, would have become with me, "like one of those things which had never happened," had I not, as I stood recently on the door-step of Bennett's hotel in Hartford, heard a man say, "there goes Peter Rugg and his child! he looks wet and weary, and farther from Boston than ever." I was satisfied it was the same man that I had seen more than three years before; for whoever has once seen Peter Rugg, can never after be deceived as to his identity. "Peter Rugg!" said I, "and who is Peter Rugg?" "That," said the stranger, "is more than any one can tell exactly. He is a famous traveller, held in light esteem by all innholders, for he never stops to eat, drink, or sleep. I wonder why the government do not employ him to carry the mail." "Aye," said a by-stander, "that is a thought bright only on one side; how long would it take, in that case, to send a letter to Boston, for Peter has already, to my knowledge, been more than twenty years travelling to that place."—"But," said I, "does the man never stop any where; does he never converse with any one? I saw this man more than three years since, near Providence, and I heard a strange story about him. Pray, sir, give me some account of this man." "Sir," said the stranger, "those who know the most respecting that man, say the least. I have heard it asserted that heaven sometimes sets a mark on a man, either for judgment or a trial. Under which Peter Rugg now labours, I cannot say; therefore I am rather inclined to pity, than to judge." "You speak like a humane man," said I, "and pray if you have known him so long, I pray you will give me some account of him. Has his appearance much altered in that time?" "Why, yes. He looks as though he never ate, drank, or slept; and his child looks older than himself, and he looks like time broke off from eternity, and anxious to gain a resting place." "And how does his horse look?" said I. "As for his horse, he looks fatter and gayer, and shows more animation and courage, than he did twenty years ago. The last time Rugg spoke to me, he inquired how far it was to Boston. I told him just one hundred miles."—"Why," said he, "how can you deceive me so? It is cruel to mislead a traveller. I have lost my way; pray direct me the nearest way to Boston." I repeated it was one hundred miles. "How can you say so," said he, "I was told last evening it was but fifty, and I have travelled all night." "But," said I, "you are now travelling from Boston. You must turn back." "Alas," said he, "it is all turn back! Boston shifts with the wind, and plays all round the compass. One man tells me it is to the East, another to the West; and the guide posts too, they all point the wrong way." "But will you not stop and rest," said I; "you seem wet and weary." "Yes," said he, "it has been foul weather since I left home." "Stop then, and refresh yourself." "I must not stop, I must reach home to-night if possible: though I think you must be mistaken in the distance to Boston." He then gave the reins to his horse, which he restrained with difficulty, and disappeared in a moment. A few days afterwards I met the man a little this side Claremont, winding around the hills in Unity, at the rate, I believe, of twelve miles an hour."

"Is Peter Rugg his real name, or has he accidentally gained that name?" "I know not, but presume he will not deny his name; you can ask him, for see, he has turned his horse, and is passing this way." In a moment, a dark coloured, high spirited horse approached, and would have passed without stopping, but I had resolved to speak to Peter Rugg, or whoever the man might be. Accordingly I stepped into the street, and as the horse approached, I made a feint of stopping him. The man immediately reined in his horse. "Sir," said I, "may I be so bold as to inquire if you are not Mr. Rugg? for I think I have seen you before." "My name is Peter Rugg," said he, "I have unfortunately lost my way; I am wet and weary, and will take it kindly of you to direct me to Boston." "You live in Boston, do you; and in what street?" "In Middle-street."—"When did you leave Boston?" "I cannot tell precisely; it seems a considerable time." "But how did you and your child become so wet? It has not rained here to-day." "It has just rained a heavy shower up the river. But I shall not reach Boston to-night, if I tarry. Would you advise me to take the old road, or the turnpike?" "Why, the old road is one hundred and seventeen miles, and the turnpike is ninety-seven." "How can you say so? you impose on me; it is wrong to trifle with a traveller; you know it is but forty miles from Newburyport to Boston." "But this is not Newburyport; this is Hartford." "Do not deceive me, sir. Is not this town Newburyport, and the river that I have been following, the Merrimac?" "No, Sir, this is Hartford, and the river, the Connecticut." He wrung his hands, and looked incredulous. "Have the rivers, too, changed their courses, as the cities have changed places? But see, the clouds are gathering in the south, and we shall have a rainy night. Ah, that fatal oath !" He would tarry no longer, his impatient horse leaped off, his hind flanks rising like wings, he seemed to devour all before him, and to scorn all behind.

I had now, as I thought, discovered a clue to the history of Peter Rugg, and I determined, the next time my business called me to Boston, to make a further inquiry. Soon after, I was enabled to collect the following particulars from Mrs. Croft, an aged lady in Middle-street, who has resided in Boston, during the last twenty years. Her narration is this—" The last summer, a person just at twilight, stopped at the door of the late Mrs. Rugg. Mrs. Croft, on coming to the door, perceived a stranger, with a child by his side, in an old weather-beaten carriage, with a black horse. The stranger asked for Mrs. Rugg, and was informed that Mrs. Rugg had died in a good old age, more than twenty years before that time. The stranger replied, " How can you deceive me so ? do ask Mrs. Rugg to step to the door." " Sir, I assure you Mrs. Rugg has not lived here these nineteen years ; no one lives here but myself, and my name is Betsey Croft." The stranger paused, and looked up and down the street, and said, " Though the painting is rather faded, this looks like my house." " Yes," said the child, " that is the stone before the door, that I used to sit on to eat my bread and milk." " But," said the stranger, " it seems to be on the wrong side of the street. Indeed, every thing here seems to be misplaced. The streets are all changed, the people are all changed, the town seems changed, and what is strangest of all, Catherine Rugg has deserted her husband and child." " Pray," said the stranger, " has John Foy come home from sea ? he went a long voyage, he is my kinsman. If I could see him, he could give me some account of Mrs. Rugg." " Sir," said Mrs. Croft, " I never heard of John Foy. Where did he live ?"— " Just above here, in Orange-tree Lane." " There is no such place in this neighborhood." " What do you tell me ! Are the streets gone ? Orange-tree Lane is at the head of Hanover Street, near Pemberton's hill." " There is no such lane now." " Madam ! you cannot be serious. But you doubtless know my brother William Rugg. He lives in Royal-Exchange Lane, near King Street." " I know of no such lane ; and I am sure there is no such street as King Street, in this town." " No such street as King Street ! Why woman ! you mock me. You may as well tell me there is no King George. However, madam, you see I am wet and weary, I must find a resting place. I will go to Hart's tavern, near the market." " Which market, sir ? for you seem perplexed ; we have several markets."— You know there is but one market near the Town dock." " O, the old market, but no such man as Hart kept there these twenty years." Here the stranger seemed disconcerted, and uttered to himself quite audibly, " Strange mistake ; how much this looks like Boston! It certainly has a great resemblance to it; but I perceive my mistake now. Some other Mrs. Rugg, some other Middle-street." Then said he, "Madam, can you direct me to Boston?" "Why this is Boston—the city of Boston; I know of no other Boston." "City of Boston it may be; but it is not the Boston where I live. I recollect now, I came over a bridge instead of a ferry. Pray what bridge is that, I just came over." "It is Charles River Bridge." "I perceive my mistake, there is a ferry between Boston and Charlestown, there is no bridge. Ah, I perceive my mistake, if I was in Boston my horse would carry me directly to my own door. But my horse shows by his impatience, that he is in a strange place.—Absurd, that I should have mistaken this place for the old town of Boston! it is a much finer city than the town of Boston. It has been built long since Boston. I fancy it must lie at a distance from this city, as the good woman seems ignorant of it." At these words, his horse began to chafe, and strike the pavement with his fore feet; the stranger seemed a little bewildered, and said, "No home to night," and giving the reins to his horse, passed up the street, and I saw no more of him."

It was evident that the generation to which Peter Rugg belonged had passed away.

This was all the account of Peter Rugg, I could obtain from Mrs. Croft; but she directed me to an elderly man, Mr. James Felt, who lived near her, and who had kept a record of the principal occurrences for the last fifty years. At my request, she sent for him; and after I had related to him the object of my inquiry, Mr. Felt told me "he had known Rugg in his youth; that his disappearance had caused some surprise; but as it sometimes happens that men run away, sometimes to be rid of others, and sometimes to be rid of themselves; and as Rugg took his child with him, and his own horse and chair; and as it did not appear that any creditors made a stir, the occurrence soon mingled itself in the stream of oblivion; and Rugg and his child, horse and chair, were soon forgotten."—"It is true," said Mr. Felt, "sundry stories grew out of Rugg's affair, whether true or false I cannot tell; but stranger things have happened in my day, without even a newspaper notice." "Sir," said I, "Peter Rugg is now living. I have lately seen Peter Rugg and his child, horse and chair; therefore, I pray you to relate to me all you know or ever heard of him." "Why, my friend," said James Felt, "that Peter Rugg is now a living man I will not deny; but that you have seen Peter Rugg and his child is impossible, if you mean a small child, for Jenny Rugg, if living, must be at least—let me see—Boston massacre, 1770—Jenny Rugg was about ten years old. Why, sir, Jenny Rugg, if living, must be more than sixty years of age. That Peter Rugg is living, is highly probable, as he was only ten years older than myself; and I was only eighty last March; and I am as likely to live twenty years longer, as any man." Here I perceived that Mr. Felt was in his dotage, and I despaired from gaining any intelligence from him, on which I could depend.

I took my leave of Mrs. Croft, and proceeded to my lodgings at the Marlborough Hotel.

If Peter Rugg, thought I, has been travelling since the Boston massacre, there is no reason why he should not travel to the end of time. If the present generation know little of him, the next will know less, and Peter and his child will have no hold on this world.

In the course of the evening, I related my adventure in Middle-street. "Hah!" said one of the company, smiling, "do you really think you have seen Peter Rugg? I have heard my grandfather speak of him, as though he seriously believed his own story." "Sir," said I, "pray let us compare your grandfather's story of Mr. Rugg, with my own." "Peter Rugg, sir, if my grandfather was worthy of credit, once lived in Middle-street, in this city. He was a man in comfortable circumstances, had a wife and one daughter, and was generally esteemed for his sober life and manners. But unhappily his temper, at times, was altogether ungovernable, and then, his language was terrible. In these fits of passion, if a door stood in his way, he would never do less than kick a pannel through. He would sometimes throw his heels over his head, and come down on his feet, uttering oaths in a circle; and thus in a rage, he was the first who performed a somerset, and did what others have since learnt to do for merriment and money. Once, Rugg was seen to bite a ten-penny nail in halves. In those days, every body, both men and boys, wore wigs; and Peter, at these moments of violent passion, would become so profane, that his wig would rise up from his head. Some said, it was on account of his terrible language. Others accounted for it in a more philosophical way, and said it was caused by the expansion of his scalp; as violent passion, we know, will swell the veins and expand the head. While these fits were on him, Rugg had no respect for heaven or earth. Except this infirmity, all agreed that Rugg was a good sort of a man; for when his fits were over, nobody was so ready to commend a placid temper as Peter.

"It was late in autumn, one morning, that Rugg in his own chair, with a fine large bay horse, took his daughter, and proceeded to Concord. On his return, a violent storm overtook him. At dark, he stopped in Menotomy, (now West-Cambridge,) at the door of a Mr. Cutter, a friend of his, who urged him to tarry the night. On Rugg's declining to stop, Mr. Cutter urged him vehemently. "Why, Mr. Rugg," said Cutter, "the storm is overwhelming you; the night is exceeding dark; your little daughter will perish; you are in an open chair, and the tempest is increasing." "*Let the storm increase*," said Rugg, with a fearful oath, "*I will see home to-night, in spite of the last tempest! or may I never see home!*" At these words he gave the whip to his high spirited horse, and disappeared in a moment. But Peter Rugg did not reach home that night, nor the next; nor, when he became a missing man, could he ever be traced beyond Mr. Cutter's in Menotomy. For a long time after, on every dark and stormy night, the wife of Peter Rugg would fancy she heard the crack of a whip, and the fleet tread of a horse, and the rattling of a carriage, passing her door.—The neighbors, too, heard the same noises, and some said they knew it was Rugg's horse; the tread on the pavement was perfectly familiar to them. This occurred so repeatedly, that at length the neighbors watched with lanterns, and saw the real Peter Rugg, with his own horse and chair, and child sitting beside him, pass directly before his own door, his head turning toward his house, and himself making every effort to stop his horse, but in vain. The next day, the friends of Mrs. Rugg exerted themselves to find her husband and child. They inquired at every public house in town; but it did not appear that Rugg made any stay in Boston. No one, after Rugg had passed his own door, could give any account of him; though it was asserted by some that the clatter of Rugg's horse and carriage over the pavements shook the houses on both sides of the streets.—And this is credible, if indeed Rugg's horse and carriage did pass on that night. For at this day, in many of the streets, a loaded truck or team in passing, will shake the houses like an earthquake. However, Rugg's neighbors never afterwards watched again; some of them treated it all as a delusion, and thought no more of it. Others, of a different opinion, shook their heads, and said nothing. Thus Rugg and his child, horse and chair, were soon forgotten; and probably many in the neighborhood never heard a word on the subject.

"There was indeed a rumour, that Rugg afterwards was seen in Connecticut, between Suffield and Hartford, passing through the country, like a streak of chalk. This gave occasion to Rugg's friends to make further inquiry. But the more they inquired, the more they were baffled. If they heard of Rugg, one day in Connecticut—the next, they heard of him winding around the hills in New-Hampshire; and soon after, a man in a chair, with a small child, exactly answering the description of Peter Rugg, would be seen in Rhode-Island, inquiring the way to Boston.

"But that which chiefly gave a colour of mystery to the story of Peter Rugg, was the affair at Charlestown bridge. The toll-gatherer asserted, that sometimes, on the darkest and most stormy nights, when no object could be discerned, about the time Rugg was missing, a horse and wheel carriage, with a noise equal to a troop, would at midnight, in utter contempt of the rates of toll, pass over the bridge. This occurred so frequently, that the toll-gatherer, resolved to attempt a discovery. Soon after, at the usual time, apparently the same horse and carriage approached the bridge from Charlestown square. The toll-gatherer, prepared, took his stand as near the middle of the bridge as he dared, with a large three-legged stool in his hand. As the appearance passed, he threw the stool at the horse, but heard nothing, except the noise of the stool skipping across the bridge. The toll-gatherer, on the next day asserted that the stool went directly through the body of the horse; and he persisted in that belief ever after. Whether Rugg, or whoever the person was, ever passed the bridge again, the toll-gatherer would never tell—and when questioned, seemed anxious to wave the subject. And thus, Peter Rugg and his child, horse and carriage, remain a mystery to this day."

This, sir, is all that I could learn of Peter Rugg in Boston.

THE HAUNTED FOREST.

On the borders of an extensive, dark, and almost trackless forest, in Normandy, lived Antonio Fuseli. He had married, early in life, a beautiful woman, whose many amiable and estimable qualities ensured her the love and respect of all who knew her; they were blessed with three lovely children, two sons and a daughter, who were all that the fond parents could wish. The happiness of the whole was the ruling motive of each; and if complete enjoyment was ever bestowed on human beings, it certainly was the lot of this highly favored family. They were not, in the estimation of the world, rich; but they possessed an ample sufficiency of all the comforts of life; they were content with their lot, and envied not the state of the proudest monarch. The children were educated, beneath their parents' eye, in habits of virtue, industry, and economy; and as they grew into life, there seemed nothing left to wish.

Alphonso and Julien were the fellow laborers, the companions, and oftentimes the counsellors, of their venerated father; while the lovely Adela was ever the affectionate and cheerful attendant of her beloved mother, in whatever employment or recreation she was engaged. She was the idol of her brothers, and returned their affection with all the enthusiasm of a youthful, unsophisticated heart. Her beauty and amiable deportment had obtained for her the appellation of 'the Flower of the Forest,' through the whole neighborhood: yet so little conscious was she of any superiority she possessed over her young companions, and so condescending to all, that even envy could find no trait in her character on which to vent its malice.

Years rolled on, and saw them enjoying this sunshine of the soul:—But the experience of every day is sufficient to teach us, that a state of complete and lasting felicity is not designed to crown our earthly existence. Mutability and change are indelibly stamped on every enjoyment of life. The happiness of the family of Fuseli, which had continued hitherto without any apparent interruption, was destined to receive a severe check, in the declining health of the affectionate wife and mother. They saw her sinking under the pressure of a hopeless disease; and their saddened hearts felt every pang she endured. The patient victim alone seemed entirely reconciled to the inevitable result. Adela watched over her with the most untiring solicitude; and when the dread mandate arrived that deprived her of this adored parent, she felt such a sense of utter desolation, that the world appeared to present nothing worth living for. But her reason and judgment soon aroused her from this torpor of grief, and she was convinced that society had still claims on her exertions. She had a beloved father and dear brothers, whose kind and affectionate attentions demanded a return on her part, and a grateful heart prompted her to suppress her own sorrows, and endeavour to solace theirs. Indeed the children began to feel that their united energies were required to draw their remaining parent from that state of fixed melancholy which seemed to have taken possession of his mind. He received their endearments with affectionate gratitude, and sometimes with cheerfulness ; but he would leave his home for hours, and not unfrequently for whole days, and penetrate into the deep recesses of the gloomy forest, to indulge, without interruption, the sorrow that pressed so heavily on his heart. His children observed and deplored it ; but regarding his solitude as sacred, they dared not intrude : and they unitedly resolved to contribute all in their power to increase the enjoyments of his home, by which means they hoped to effect the change so much desired.

One evening he was from home later than usual, and his sons were preparing to go in quest of him, when he entered the door of his dwelling, with a trembling step, and the paleness of death on his countenance. They were shocked and alarmed, and all gathered around him with anxious inquiries if he was ill, and proposed to call in medical advice. But he, in a faint and agitated voice, assured them he was not ill, but greatly fatigued from having extended his walk beyond the usual limits, and requested that he might be permitted to retire to rest without answering any more questions. Then affectionately bidding them good night, and solemnly commending them to the protection of Heaven, he went to his own room. His children felt that all was not right, and passed many hours together in vain conjectures on his altered appearance. At length they separated at a very late hour, but not to sleep—their fears for a beloved and only parent were too strong to admit of repose.

When the morning sun began to shed its cheerful influence around, they all arose from sleepless pillows, and met in the little parlor which had been the scene of so much domestic enjoyment ; they looked around the room, and at each other with an expression of vague inquiry, as if to ask where those joys had flown. The father was the first to break the profound silence. "My children," said he, "you need not be told that the great object of all my exertions and solicitude in life, has been the promotion of your happiness. I have endeavoured, both by precept and example, to lead you in the paths of virtue and honor. If I have erred, it was an error in judgment, and not a design to mislead you ; and I have been amply repaid in your dutiful and correct conduct. I know all your local attachments are centered in this pleasant spot, where you and I were born. It is, therefore, with pain I inform you that we must remove from this place, and that very speedily. I know you will be surprised and afflicted at this sudden resolution, for sudden I acknowledge it is. I had thought to die amid the scenes that gave me birth—but it must not be so." (He went on without interruption, for no one of his auditors had power to speak.) "I have from a boy been accustomed to hear tales of terror connected with the forest, to which I gave no credence; but the events of yesterday have convinced me we are in a dangerous neighborhood. I should feel that I had but ill performed the duty of a father should I die and leave you exposed to such influences. I cannot now be more explicit; but as you value your own happiness, and future peace of mind, I charge you never to attempt to penetrate the forest beyond the little fountain." He ceased, and as they had never been in the habit of questioning the propriety or wisdom of their father's decisions, they did not now venture to remonstrate.

In a short time a purchaser was found, and the once happy family of Antonio Fuseli quit, forever, their paternal domain, and settled in a distant part of the country.

Change of scene seemed to produce a favorable effect, and they again enjoyed the calm serenity which ever attends the virtuous. This, however, was but an evanescent joy. In less than two years, death again visited their habitation, and they were left orphans indeed—the eldest scarce twenty-two years of age.

A short time after the demise of the father, it was necessary to look over his papers, in order to make a settlement of his concerns. In a little private drawer in his escritoir, they found a manuscript, in his well known hand, which developed the mystery that had so long occupied their minds, but which they had never ventured to mention in their father's presence since the day it occurred.

The address began with an affectionate exhortation to avoid, carefully and resolutely, every temptation to which they may be exposed, none of which would be likely to assail the young more powerfully than the desire to possess riches. "But know this, my children, that wealth procured by unlawful or unjustifiable means, or in any way but by honest industry, can bring no joy to the possessor; and all who endeavour to enrich themselves by supernatural agency, are planting on their temples a gilded crown of thorns—the greater the weight of jewels that adorn it, the sharper the pang it inflicts. I well know you feel a strong desire to be informed of the events of that ever memorable day which has made an entire change in the prospects of our family. You have never pained me by questions on that subject, and I feel the full value of your delicacy and forbearance; I am therefore giving you proof of the entire confidence I have in you, by gratifying your natural curiosity on a subject which I have never been able to bring my mind to converse. When our Heavenly Father saw fit to deprive me of what I held most dear and valuable in your ever lamented mother, I sought the solitude of the forest, as a place where I could indulge my sorrows without fear of interruption. I threw up a little moss seat on the brink of the fountain, whose plaintive murmur seemed so in unison with the tone of my feelings; and near it I erected a humble monument of stone, commemorative of the virtues of the dear departed one. Here it was my delight to sit whole hours, while my spirit seemed to hold communion with beings of another world; and I always returned, as you must have observed, calm, and often cheerful, to enjoy the comforts that yet remained to me in my dear children. It is true I sometimes heard strange noises, like whispering voices or a distant laugh; but I ever regarded them as the effect of imagination, or the wind in the tall trees, and felt no sensation of fear. But, on that never to be forgotten day, as I sat lost in soothing contemplation, I distinctly heard sounds of distress quite near me, and some one calling for assistance. It was an appeal that I thought I had no right to withstand. Prompted by feelings of humanity, I instantly arose and attempted to force a passage through the tangled underwood, beyond which I had never penetrated. It was a long time before I effected my purpose; but at length I found an opening through which I crept, and soon discovered the object of my search. It was a little decrepit old man, on the ground, struggling to free himself from the weight of a bag that was fastened to his shoulders. He had fallen beneath his burthen, and lay apparently unable to move. I offered him my assistance, and, after undoing the strap which bound his pack, helped him to rise on his feet. He expressed much gratitude, and requested, as an additional favor, that I would assist him to raise his burthen from the ground, and carry it a short distance, to a place where it was to be deposited. I took hold on one side; but what was my astonishment to find its weight as much as our united strength could raise! I told him I did not wonder he had fallen under it, but I was surprised to find that a man so aged and feeble could have taken a single step encumbered with such a load. 'Alas! sir,' said he, 'I have borne it a weary way; but I serve a master who never thinks the weight of his gold can be a burthen to any one. Yet he is very liberal withall, and never grudges us a share of his treasures.' On hearing that it was gold we were bearing, my heart misgave me,—I supposed I had put myself in the power of a gang of robbers, who would not hesitate to take the life of any one who had thus accidently discovered their haunts. While my mind was thus occupied, my ears were assailed by the most deafening shouts and hoarse peals of laughter, which so completely terrified me, that I refused to proceed another step. The old man urged me to go on, assuring me I had nothing to fear, and that he would request me to assist him no further than round a projecting point of rock that was just before us, promising me I should be amply rewarded for my trouble. I proceeded on, through fear, but gave myself up for lost. I felt that I was alone and unarmed, in the midst of a savage host, whom I expected to encounter at every turn. We reached the point, when my guide raising a small trap door which opened into an immense cave, discovered such heaps of shining metal as almost bewildered my senses; and emptying his bag, he shook the contents into the vault, where instantly a man of majestic figure, but of a very stern aspect, appeared, and bestowed many commendations on him for his industry and fidelity. He then turned his dark piercing eyes on me, saying, 'You have brought me a new servant.' The old man gave a most significant nod. I now felt that I was in the presence of the great banditt, and that the crisis of my fate was fast approaching; yet I assumed courage to inform him it was impossible for me to enter his service, as I had a family dependant on my care, whom I could not desert on any consideration. He told me he well knew I had a family; but I might serve him, and still reside with them. I had only to obligate myself to come to him, at a stated hour every day, and perform such offices as he should appoint me; in return for which I should be at full liberty to enter the vault whenever I pleased, and take from it as much gold as I chose. I assured him I possessed a sufficiency, and had no desire for more wealth—still thinking I was among free booters. He then took from his pocket a well filled purse, which he offered as a reward for what I had already done; but, under the same impression, I persisted in declining to receive any share of his unlawful gains. I saw the storm gathering in his countenance. He turned on me a look full of terror, which flashed conviction on my mind that I was not holding converse with a being of this world. That look bespoke the demon; and in a voice more appalling than the hoarsest thunder, he said, 'grovelling wretch, if you are not to be tempted we will try other methods;' and stamping furiously with his foot on the ground, I was instantly surrounded by the most horrible shapes, and my ears were assailed by noises, such as none but demons could utter. I turned, and fled with incredible speed, as if assisted by an invisible power, finding myself close pursued, until I came to the opening through which I had passed, and crossed the little brook that falls from the fountain, and which runs the whole length of the forest. I had now successfully escaped from their malice, as I well knew that no evil spirit has power to cross a running stream. My senses were nearly gone; and my strength entirely failing, I sunk on the earth, and distinctly heard them, as they desisted from the chase, saying, 'if he had but touched a piece of our master's gold, he could not have foiled us thus. Had he yielded to one temptation, we might have found him an easy prey.' I returned thanks, most fervently, that I had been thus preserved; and after recovering strength to rise on my feet, I returned home, firmly determined never again to enter that fatal place. When alone, I seriously revolved the probable consequences of leaving my dear children exposed to such dangerous influences, when they should no longer have the experience of a father to guide their youthful steps. And the result was a determination to tear myself from that endeared spot and sacrifice all my local attachments to their happiness You are now in possession of all the motives by which I have been actuated, and I trust you will know how to appreciate them. May that Almighty Power, which has preserved me through life, guide and guard you, my children, and shed unnumbered blessings on you."

That this communication should differently affect those, to whom it was jointly addressed, will be no matter of surprise to any one who has studied the human heart, or has the slightest knowledge of the various feelings that arise from the same source, as the characters of the individuals most immediately concerned may vary.

Alphonso, who was of a bold, aspiring temper, perused it with attention, and felt really grateful for the kindness that had dictated the many cautions it contained; but he felt the sparks of avarice and ambition (which had hitherto lain nearly dormant under the mild counsels and virtuous example of his pious parents) now rising to an uncontrollable flame. The more placid, and regulated spirit of Julien, prompted him to return thanks that he had been timely forewarned of dangers, which made him shudder to think of, and would have proved destructive to his happiness had he fallen on them unawares. He saw in his present lot all that his ambition aspired to.

The gentle Adela, who had ever been the favorite companion of both brothers, began to feel that the eldest took less delight, than formerly, in conversing with her; she carefully retraced every part of her past conduct towards him, but could not discover in what she had offended him. It was in vain that she strove to amuse or please him. She would take her lute, and although she touched it with inimitable grace and skill, and accompanied it with the touching tones of her sweet voice, and sang his most favorite airs, yet she could not draw from him the slightest expression of approbation. She could freely pour her complaints into the ear of the affectionate Julien, and they both joined in lamenting a change, for which they could not account. They mourned together, that one who had ever been so kind, so cheerful and so happy, should now abandon society, and seem entirely lost to all the engagements of life; but they encouraged a hope that a little time would unfold the mystery.

The truth was, Alphonso's mind was wholly absorbed in golden dreams; new feelings and desires were awakened; and he delighted in nothing but devising plans, by which he might possess himself of some of the treasures of the cavern, without violating the injunction of his revered parent, which he had ever held sacred, or placing himself in the power of the demons. For this reason, he avoided, as much as possible, the society of his brother and sister, from whom he was peculiarly solicitous to conceal all that was passing in his mind.

Things went on in this state for some weeks. At last he came to the desperate resolution to endure it no longer, but go to the place and see for himself. "I could wish," he would often say to himself, "that my dear father had inquired what the services were that he would be expected to perform—perhaps they were not hard, or sinful—I may just find out what nature they are of, and perhaps enrich myself, and place my beloved brother and sister in a higher station than their unaspiring hearts ever dreampt of. The lovely Adela is too fair a flower to bloom in the shade of obscurity. How proud shall I be to place her in a situation equal to her merit. I must, at least, make the experiment. The motive will justify the means; and if I do not succeed, they shall never know I have attempted it." After his resolution was taken, he seemed more cheerful, conversed through the day, as in former times, and returned the caresses of his sweet sister with increased tenderness. They were delighted with the change, and felt that domestic happiness would again be a resident in their little circle.

One evening, after much pleasant and interesting conversation, the eldest brother informed them that he had a short journey to perform, which would oblige him to be absent a week or more, and they must make themselves as happy as possible in his absence. They regretted the separation, and hoped his return would not be long delayed.

Early in the morning he took an affectionate leave of them, and set forward with his mind full of great plans for a future life of splendor. He travelled on, rapidly revolving in his mind the vast sums of money, and the honors that seemed to await his acceptance. But when he arrived in the neighborhood of his former residence, and every object that met his eye told a tale of by-gone days, his heart beat with a variety of contending emotions. The scene of all his early enjoyments, and the innocent sports of his infant days, brought a most vivid recollection of the pious lessons and amiable example of his departed parents, and his over-wrought feelings found timely vent in a copious shower of tears. His first resolution was to return instantly home, banish from his mind all aspiring thoughts, and live in the practice of the duties he had so early been taught. But he had travelled a long journey, and his weary horse, as well as himself, required rest. After a night of unquiet repose, he rose at an early hour, and left the house to recruit his sunken spirits by a morning walk amid those familiar and still beloved scenes. With indescribable emotion he beheld the sun just rising above the tall trees of the forest; and his frame shuddered at the painful recollection of the imminent danger his beloved father had escaped, and to which he had been so nigh exposing himself. But he wished, as it might, and in all probability would, be the last time he should ever make the same journey to visit the melancholy spot which his dear father had chosen for the indulgence of his grief. No harm could possibly arise from a visit to this hallowed sanctuary of sorrow. He accordingly walked forward with a hasty step, and he trembled in every limb as he entered beneath the shade of the dark forest. "Yet, why should I be thus agitated?" said he, endeavouring to rally his spirits. "My father's prohibition did not extend to this side the fountain."

In a short time he arrived at a small opening, but the sight of the little moss seat which the hands, now cold and motionless, had reared, and the monumental stone, inscribed with the cherished name of Lauretta Fuseli, which was that of his beloved mother, almost deprived him of sense and motion. He reclined on the seat, and covering his face with both hands, gave free vent to the feelings with which his heart was almost bursting. His tears proved a relief to his agonised mind, and, after passing some hours in retracing former scenes, he became more calm, and was endeavouring to summon fortitude to take a final leave of the interesting spot, when he was nearly petrified by the most piercing shrieks, uttered in a female voice, and distinctly heard the words, "Is there no kind heart near, to pity and protect me?" This was an appeal he had not power to withstand. He instantly forgot his father's injunction, and flew to find an opening, through which he might pass. He sprang across the brook, and forcing a passage, as directed by the noise, arrived with much exertion at the scene of distress. A young lady of dazzling beauty, clad in the most costly habiliments, was in the hands of a fierce looking ruffian, who was in the act of unclasping a splendid chain of brilliants from her fair neck, with the other hand round her throat with the intention of strangling her. Her rich dress was soiled and torn, and it was evident she had struggled till her strength was nearly exhausted.

Alphonso was young, stout and athletic, and with one blow he laid the desperado at his feet; and raising the almost lifeless form of the beautiful female from the ground, he carried her in his arms to a spring, at a short distance, and sprinkling a little water in her face, she soon revived, and opened on him a pair of eyes which rivalled the diamonds that decorated her person.

He politely offered to conduct her to a place of safety, which she accepted with the most lively expressions of gratitude, informing him that her father's residence was about a mile distant—that, tempted by the freshness of the morning, she had walked out unattended, and penetrated the forest beyond her usual bounds, where she had met this disastrous adventure; and, she added, had you not appeared to rescue me from the villain, my life must have fallen a sacrifice to my temerity. She raised her bright eyes to his face, and he saw her beautiful countenance suffused with a blush that spoke volumes to his heart.

They soon arrived at the gate of a splendid mansion, and passed through throngs of servants to a saloon, where sat a man of stately appearance, who rose as they entered, and exclaimed, "My daughter!" She threw herself into his arms, overcome with emotion, and sobbing aloud on his breast, said, "My dear father, but for the courage and gallantry of this gentleman, you had been, at this moment, childless." "Explain yourself, my child," said he, and pressing Alphonso affectionately by the hand, requested him to be seated; while his daughter related all that has been told above, interspersed with the most flattering encomiums on the generosity of her deliverer.

The father loaded him with professions of gratitude and friendship, and insisted that he should be their guest for the present. This invitation, so congenial to his present feelings and wishes, was not to be declined. The young lady left the room, and after changing her disordered dress, returned in a garb more splendid and becoming than any thing he had ever beheld; and he thought he had never cast his eyes on a being so lovely. Our hero was then conducted to a chamber, where a great variety of superb dresses were spread before him, and he was requested to select what was most to his fancy, and array himself for dinner. There was company expected, and his travelling attire would not comport with the occasion, as he was to be introduced as the particular friend of the master of the mansion and his fair daughter. He was so dazzled that it was a long time ere he could decide; and when full dressed, he could hardly leave the large mirror that displayed his glittering figure from head to foot. A servant at length came to summon him to the table.

When he entered the dining room, he was introduced to each one of the party, who sat down to an elegant repast, and quaffed the richest wines from cups of pure gold. When the subject of the lady Lusette's deliverance was introduced, all the company were unanimous in the praises of her preserver. "You are indeed a favorite of fortune," said a youth who sat next him

"I cannot but envy you the honor of this day's achievement." "When I first saw the young lady in such danger," replied Alphonso, "I almost feared it would be out of my power to rescue her, as I thought she was in the hands of one of the infernal spirits which inhabit this forest." At this moment a tremendous groan was uttered; and on looking up he saw the face of every guest, and even the fair countenance of the lovely Lusette, darkened by a terrific frown. He was silent—and after a few moments pause, the master of the feast proposed removing to another apartment, where music and dancing filled up the time till a very late hour; and the *enchanted* Alphonso had the felicity of receiving the fair hand of her he had saved from death in the morning, as a partner for the evening.

His senses were perfectly entranced; and for three successive days, he rode, he walked, he danced, he sung and feasted, without a thought of home, or of the future—every faculty of his mind was absorbed in the time being, for the object of his adoration was the sharer in all his joys. At length, a thought of the still dear friends he had left behind, and a desire to make them acquainted with his fair prospects, gave him resolution to tear himself away; and he mentioned his intention to his kind entertainers. They tried, by every blandishment, to prevail on him to alter his plan; but consented to his departure, on condition of a promise to return soon, and pass a longer time with them. To this proposal he gladly assented, for the spell was close woven around him; and he took his leave, loaded with rich and valuable presents; Lusette bid him adieu with a sigh, which his unpractised heart feelingly responded. She took from her finger a ring of great value, which she placed on his, saying, with the most winning softness, "Remember your promise." Of this he needed not to be reminded. A beautiful horse, richly caparisoned, was presented him, and he was furnished with a guide, who soon extricated him from the forest, and took him, by a different route, to the place from which he entered it. He there disposed of the horse that had brought him from home, and set forward on his return in a much superior style to that in which he had commenced his journey.

He was most affectionately received on his arrival by his dear brother and sister, who had passed the time of his absence in anxious and fruitless conjectures as to the nature of the business that had called him from home, which he had not thought proper to intrust to them; for there had hitherto been no secrets in this family of love. They were so much delighted to see him return in safety, that they did not, that night, remark the alteration in his personal appearance. But the next day, when they had leisure to notice his costly attire, the diamond ring on his finger, the elagant horse he rode, and saw him ostentatiously display large sums of gold, they were lost in wonder and astonishment, and could not suppress fears which they dared not even hint to each other.

He, however, soon after his return, proposed to explain to them all the good fortune that had befallen him, which he did faithfully, concealing only the place where he had encountered this adventure; of which he knew they entertained the most dreadful suspicions. He told them the Baron was immensely rich and powerful; that he was a widower, with no child or heir to his vast possessions but the incomparable Lusette. He could not but acknowledge to himself, that the modest, unassuming Adela was equally beautiful; but their beauty was of a very different character. There was a fascination about the Lady Lusette, that he naturally attributed to the influence of the different circles in which they had been educated. The heiress of wealth and splendor, with hundreds of admirers in her train, must have acquired an easy confidence, and a commanding air, that could not be found in the more humble walks of life. Yet he proudly looked forward to a day, when he should bring the two dearest objects of his heart acquainted with each other.

The haughty Baron had, it is true, conferred on him many marks of special favor; yet he dared not ask himself what were the nature of his expectations. His reason and judgment forbade the encouragement of a hope, that he would confer such a treasure as his only daughter, on one whose name had never been heard of twenty miles from home.

So completely was he inthralled, that he determined at all events to repeat his visit to the Castle. After representing to his brother and sister, the many advantages that would probably result from cultivating such an acquaintance, but which were far from convincing their unaspiring minds, he presented them with a large purse of gold, and again set forward on his journey. The supernatural speed of his courser did not outstrip his impatience; and so entirely was the infatuated youth absorbed in the idea of the happiness that awaited him, that he felt no surprise or misgiving when, at the close of the first day, he found himself at the gate of the Baronial Castle, a distance of nearly two hundred miles.

He was received with acclamations of joy, by all the domestics. The Baron smiled more graciously, and his daughter looked more enchanting than ever. The numerous guests all crouded round to welcome him; and he thought his cup of happiness was full: But how did it overflow when his host invited him, the next morning, to a private conference; and declared his intention of bestowing on him the hand of his fair daughter, who might grace the throne of a monarch; and with her, all his wealth. He began, in the most eloquent strains, to pour forth his gratitude, when his entertainer stopped him short, telling him there were conditions to be performed on his part, to which he might not accede: in which case he was at full liberty to reject the alliance; "although," added he, with a deep drawn sigh, "I should have much to fear from the effects of such a refusal on the health and spirits of a beloved daughter. The truth is, Alphonso, I have discovered that Lusette loves you."

Enraptured, as he was, he readily promised to comply with the terms, be they what they might; feeling that the services required would fall far short of the value of the reward, and that his highest felicity would consist in devoting his life to her gratification. He was then left to seek the object of his adoration, and hear, from her lips, a confirmation of his happiness. A reciprocation of vows succeeded, and the overjoyed lover now felt that his lot was truly enviable.

The evening passed in revelry and mirth. At the stroke of midnight, a servant came to the happy Alphonso, and told him the Baron desired to speak with him in private. He instantly left the room, and found his host in an adjoining apartment, prepared with a glimmering lamp: he spoke only the words, "*Follow me*;" and opening a door, began to descend a long flight of stone steps, which terminated in a large vault, connected with an immense subterranean passage, so damp and gloomy, that he shuddered as he advanced, the lamp scarcely affording light to direct their footsteps. At the end of this, they entered a spacious apartment, in the center of which was a large caldron, throwing up a glaring blue flame, which quivered round the walls, and presented such a scene of horror, as almost chilled his blood.

The entire walls were draperied with skeletons; huge heaps of skulls and human bones were scattered on the floor, and hideous shapes flitted around in every direction. Terrified and amazed, he fearfully inquired for what purpose he had been brought into this charnel-house? His guide, assuming an authoritative tone, commanded him to dispense with questions, and attend to his instructions. He was then required to bind himself, by the most tremendous oaths, to be eternally the slave of the adorable Lusette; and never to think of any other woman as a wife.

To all that was proposed he acceded. His passion for the lady on one hand, and his fears on the other, would not suffer him to offer any resistance. All around him he heard a continual whispering and suppressed laughter, and his hair rose on his head with terror. He was then informed that the extra service required of him was merely to gratify a whim of his betrothed, to suffer himself to be harnessed, with a number of her discarded lovers, to a car, and draw her through the forest, at a certain hour, every night. Degrading as this proposition seemed to him, and however inconsistent with all her professions of tenderness and affection, he found he had no power to retract; and he promised compliance, though his heart revolted at so disgraceful a requisition. A bloody scroll was then presented him, to which he affixed his name; he was then informed, in presence of all the attending ministers of darkneas, that the marriage ceremony was now considered as ratified, and he was at liberty to go in quest of his bride.

It is true his youthful ardor was somewhat damped by the chilling scenes he had witnessed; yet he hastily retraced his steps to the room which he had left filled with gay company; among whom the idol of his heart shone unrivalled. But who can imagine his astonishment, on entering, to find the room deserted by every one but a hideous hag, of gigantic figure, and features the most distorted and disgusting; she sprang forward to meet him, throwing her long sinewy arms around him, and calling him, in a voice grating as thunder, her beloved husband; chiding his long absence, which he knew she could ill support, and repeating all the protestations of love and fidelity he had uttered to the Lady Lusette.

He strove to extricate himself from her hateful grasp, and exerting all his strength, pushed her from him, with such violence, that she fell on the floor with a most terrible crash, which brought the master of the mansion, and many of his attendants, into the room.

He cast a withering glance on the half distracted Alphonso, and angrily demanded the reason of this disturbance. Before the wretched culprit could find utterance, she arose, and with the most frightful grimaces and terrific gestures, accused him of returning her caresses with the most unfeeling abuse. "Is this the return," demanded the stern Baron, "that I am to expect for my condescension, in bestowing my only child on you—a mere mushroom? and is all your promised gratitude come to this?" It was in vain he remonstrated, and entreated to be admitted to the presence of the Lady Lusette, and pleaded his claim to such an indulgence. He was told this was all the daughter he ever had, and it was to the lady now before him, he had sworn eternal fidelity; he must therefore prepare himself to obey her commands, which were peremptory.

A heavy car was now driven to the door, and the wretched Alphonso was compelled to assume the harness, with a large number of other deluded victims; and the hag, armed with a scourge of enormous weight, seated herself, took the reins, and drove them through the forest at a furious rate; not regarding any obstructions in their way, but lashing and goring them incessantly, till their sides and backs were covered with wounds. At daybreak they were unharnessed and suffered to go to rest, if rest they could.

Thus passed every night; and the days were spent in the most disgraceful scenes of riot. Alphonso dared not reflect he felt that he was lost, in his present state; but he knew not how to extricate himself, and he could look for no end to his misery. To enhance his sufferings, an accusing conscience lent its stings, a thousand times more intolerable than his bodily torture. He knew he had voluntarily sought temptation, and that in defiance of the dying injunction of a father, whose many virtues, cultivated understanding, and long experience, gave him an unequivocal claim to the utmost deference. The intervals for thought were short; he was dragged from scenes of labor and suffering, to scenes of riot and excess, with little time for rest; and the creature to whom he had bound himself, and who had now become as loathsome and hideous as she had once been lovely, never quit his side for an instant.

In the mean time, the quiet and happy residence of his affectionate friends, had become the abode of sorrow and anxiety. The minds of Julien and Adela were constantly agitated with melancholy forebodings of his fate. Six weary months had passed, and the torture of suspense was no longer to be endured. Not a word had they heard since his departure; they knew not how, or where, to direct a line to him; nor could they hope to gain information from any human being, on the subject most interesting to them. They held frequent and long consultations on the subject, but seemed no nearer to the attainment of their desires.

At length their deliberations terminated in Julien's determination to set out in quest of the lost one; though he was wholly ignorant what route to take. He felt a confidence that he should be Heaven-directed, as he was animated by a consciousness that his motives for the journey were of the purest nature. Adela insisted on being the companion and sharer of his fatigues and perils, as she could not consent to relinquish the protection of both her brothers; and she felt she had fortitude to meet any trial they might have to encounter. It was in vain he urged all the arguments his affection suggested, to dissuade her from an undertaking, for which her youth, her sex, her native delicacy, and shrinking timidity, all combined to render her totally unfit. "You will find," said she, "dear Julien, that I have qualities which have never been called into action. Depend on it, I shall show more firmness in this enterprise than you ever thought I possessed; and to convince you of it, in the outset, my resolution is taken, to accompany or follow you." "Well, be it so," said her kind hearted brother. "Your society will lighten the fatigues of my uncertain path; but for your own sake I could wish it otherwise."

The plan being adjusted, and confiding the house to the care of a few faithful domestics, they set forward, not knowing which way to bend their course.

After travelling three or four days, without obtaining any clue to his route, they entered a pleasant road, which led through a delightfully romantic, but unfrequented tract of country; and proceeded on without seeing any thing like a human habitation, until the shadows of evening began to close around them. As night-fall approached, the heart of Julien beat with anxious fears for his beloved sister, who had never been accustomed to exposure; and he feared they should be under the necessity of passing the night unsheltered in the open air. At this crisis they saw a venerable man approaching, in the dress of a hermit. His form was somewhat bowed, and his snowy locks, and long silvery beard, plainly indicated that the frosts of many winters had passed over him. He carried a staff in his hand; yet he walked with a firm step; and as he advanced to meet them, the benevolent expression of his countenance inspired them with confidence and respect. They reined in their horses, and inquired of him the distance to the nearest habitation. "My children," said the old man, "you are far from the haunts of men. A journey of many hours will scarcely bring you to a convenient shelter. But I have a cell at hand, where you shall be welcome to all the accommodations it affords." There was so much of genuine courtesy in the manner of the speaker, that they felt no hesitation in accepting the invitation; and with many expressions of gratitude, they entered the humble cell, where they were simply, but most hospitably entertained. After supper they entered freely into conversation, and informed their friendly entertainer of the object of their present journey, and the ill success which had hitherto attended all their inquiries.

He listened attentively to a recital of every circumstance of their brother's departure, and all they knew of his adventures; and he replied, with a deep drawn sigh, "Your narrative too plainly discovers to me the fate of your deluded brother. He is, undoubtedly, one among the wretched beings who have been drawn, by various temptations, into the power of the malicious fiends in the haunted forest." At the mention of this terrible name, a cold shuddering seized them; conviction flashed on their minds, and Adela was near fainting; but by the timely application of some restoratives, which the good hermit had at hand, she soon recovered, and their kind host went on: "I feel, my children, that you have been providentially directed to me, as I have long been in possession of a talisman, which is destined to destroy the glamour of that ill fated forest, when in the hands of unsullied innocence." He then drew from his bosom a small pearl case, from which he took a brilliant gem, inscribed with the words, "*Virtue and Integrity*;" and suspending it to a chain of the purest gold, the old man hung it on the neck of the lovely Adela; telling her, if she attended strictly to his instructions, she had it now in her power to release her unhappy brother from the most intolerable slavery. "But be sure you never suffer the brightness of this inestimable jewel to contract the slightest tarnish. Keep it ever bright, as it is now; for on its unsullied brilliancy depends its influence, which will infallibly diminish if it is suffered to corrode."

He spent some time in giving them particular directions how to proceed on their great undertaking, and bestowing on them his truly parental advice; and then, preparing them beds of dried leaves, and fervently invoking the blessing and protection of Heaven on them, invited them to repose themselves.

They slept soundly until the old man awoke them, at the dawn of the morning, to join in his early devotions. After which they partook of his humble breakfast, and took their leave, attended by the blessing and benediction of their kind and pious friend.

They proceeded on their eventful journey, much relieved by the information they had gained, yet saddened by the idea of the shocking situation to which the unhappy Alphonso had reduced himself by his deplorable infatuation. Ere night they came in view of well remembered scenes, the familiarity of which brought such a crowd of painful recollections, as almost overpowered them. They rested, for the night, in the vicinity of their earliest home; and they proceeded, at an early hour in the morning, to an entrance into the dreaded forest, which their good friend, the hermit, had pointed out; expressing, at the same time, his unqualified approbation of their scrupulous observance of the prohibition their beloved parent had enjoined in regard to crossing the brook. They walked on, hardly able to find a path through which they could proceed. They penetrated far into the gloomy recesses of the tangled wood; and seeing night approaching, endeavoured to fortify their minds against the horrors they expected to encounter in passing it in such a spot. As yet, they had heard or seen nothing to alarm or terrify them; but every rustling leaf, in such a place, was enough to startle these youthful adventurers. They, however, by mutual encouragement, rallied their spirits to proceed, having been informed that nothing could be effected unless they could summon courage to pass a night in the forest.

An old dilapidated castle appeared at a distance; and in this they resolved to take shelter from the chill air, as the gathering clouds and distant thunder threatened a coming tempest. They entered, beneath a ruined gateway, and, climbing with difficulty over heaps of rubbish, came to the interior, in which they thought they might make a shift to remain. In a short time they found themselves involved in thick and impenetrable darkness, and heard such terrific sounds, as almost curdled the blood in their veins. Deep and dismal groans, hissing, and clanking of chains, shrieks of despair, and horrible execrations, mingled with the raging tempest. Hoarse peals of thunder shook the tottering edifice to its foundation, and threatened, every instant, to bury them in its ruins. The vivid flashes of lightning served but to show them the horrors of their situation. They dared not speak; but the hitherto timid girl seemed supported by a superhuman energy. She clung to the supporting arm of her brother, and ceased not to rub and polish her talisman, which emitted a dazzling lustre when the blue flame of the lightning glanced on its surface. About midnight the fury of the storm abated, and their ears were now assailed by sounds of a different, but not less terrific nature. The most disgusting shouts of revelry, and shrieks of tortured wretches, with the furious driving of a carriage, now approached, and stopped directly in front of the old castle, where they had a full view of the scene. They were almost blinded by the glare of torches: But who can conceive of their grief and horror, on seeing the dear brother of their affections, harnessed in the train that drew this ponderous vehicle; and a figure, more terrific than any thing they had ever imagined, seated in it, and incessantly applying a huge whip, composed of fiery serpents, to their lacerated shoulders, from which the blood issued at every stroke. This was more than their fortitude was equal to. They stood a moment in speechless agony; but Adela, as if by sudden inspiration, uttered a piercing shriek, sprang forward, and in a moment stood by the side of her miserable and haggard looking brother, who now lost all sense of personal suffering, in fears for her safety. He thought she had fallen into the power of the infernals, and he had the additional torture of believing it was through his means. But when he saw the scourge fall powerless, and the hand that wielded it paralysed, the numerous attending imps draw back at her approach, and vent their malice in hissing, and blowing blue sulphurious flames from their mouth and nostrils, and assuming the most terrific attitudes, and felt the soft hand of his own sweet sister kindly grasp his, and lead him from his galling chains, he was completely overpowered by feelings too powerful for his exhausted frame to support; he sunk apparently lifeless at her feet. He was raised by his affectionate brother, and conveyed to a little distance, where he soon recovered his senses; but to deplore his fall, and the trouble and danger into which he had brought them.

Adela then turned the bright beams of her talisman on the whole group of deluded wretches, who had been associated with Alphonso. In an instant their shackles dropped off, and most of them crowded around her, viewing her as a guardian angel; for but few of the number had become so degraded as to prefer the vile servitude in which they were plunged.

They rallied around the car of the enchantress. The arch demon then appeared in a form too terrible to be described; and in the most stunning voice announced his intention of quitting the forest forever. " Since my power and dominion have been set at defiance by a girl and a paultry pebble, the seat of my kingdom is henceforth removed." So saying, he stampped with his foot—the earth cleft asunder—and the whole demoniac crew, castle and all, sunk with a deafening crash, and left the little group to thank their kind deliverer, and rejoice in their escape from their disgraceful thraldom.

The dawn of morning rose on this astonished and rejoicing party ; they hastened to extricate themselves from the snares of the forest, and the family of Fuseli again sought their peaceful home, where they were welcomed with many testimonials of real joy by their household and friends, among whom much anxiety had been experienced for their safety.

Alphonso felt that he had forever lost that sunshine of the mind which is the attendant of unsullied innocence ; and conscientiously believing that his vows, though given to a demon, precluded his entering into a matrimonial engagement. No entreaties could dissuade him from a resolution he had formed to enter a convent, and pass the remainder of his life in acts of penitence.

Julien soon after married a young lady of the most amiable character ; and the lovely Adela attracted the affections of a gentleman of shining merit, whose wealth and influence placed her in a station she was well qualified to adorn ; and the talisman of *Virtue and Integrity* was never suffered to diminish in brilliancy in her happy family.

There are now roads cut through the once dreaded forest. Postillions often entertain travellers with stories of the deeds of darkness that have been perpetrated on some particular part of their route ; and a large chasm, not far from the road side, is still shown as the one through which the pandemonium vanished.

THE LONELY MAN OF THE OCEAN.

It was on the evening of her departure for a transatlantic voyage, that the quarter-deck of an English man-of-war, lying in the Tagus, was splendidly illuminated, in honor of a farewell entertainment given by the British officers to a favored selection of the residents of Lisbon.

No scene of gaiety presents a more picturesque appearance than that exhibited by the festive decorations of a full-sized man-of-war; and, on the present occasion, the *Invincible* was not behind her sisters of the ocean in the arrangements of her marine festivities. Her quarter-deck was covered by an awning of gay and party-colored flags, whose British admixture of red glowed richly and gaily in the light of the variegated lamps, which, suspended on strings, hung in long rows from the masts and rigging of the vessel. To a spectator, standing at the verge of her stern, the quarter-deck, with its awning, gay lights, and distinct groups of figures, might almost have resembled the rural and divesrified scene of a village pleasure-fair; while behind, the faces of hundreds of sailors, peeping from comparative obscurity on the gaieties of their officers, formed a whimsical and not unpicturesque back-ground. Below, the tables of the ward-room were spread with the most delicate and even costly refreshments. All was mirth and apparently reckless gaiety; and it seemed as if the sons of Neptune, in exercising their proverbial fondness for the dance, and acknowledged gallantry to their partners, had forgotten that the revolution of twenty-four hours would place a world of waters between them and the fair objects of their devotion, and would give far other employment for their limbs than the fascinating measures to which they now lent them.

There were, however, two beings in that assembly whose feelings of grief, extending from the heart to the countenance, communicated to the latter an expression which consorted ill with the gaiety of the surrounding scene. One of these countenances wore the aspect of an intense grief, which yet the mind of the possessor had strength sufficient to keep in a state of manly subjection; the other presented that appearance of unmixed, yet unutterable woe, which woman alone is capable either of feeling or meekly sustaining in silence. Christian Loëffler and Ernestine Fredeberg had been married but seven days, yet they were now passing their last evening together ere Loëffler sailed, a passenger in the *Invincible*, to the Brazils. Why circumstances thus severed those so recently united by the holiest ties, and why the devoted Ernestine was unable to accompany her husband, are queries that might be satisfactorily answered if our limits permitted. But the fact alone can here be stated.

The husband and wife joined the dance but once that evening, and then—publish it not in Almack's—they danced together! Yet their hearts sickened ere the measure was ended; and retiring to the raised end of the stern, they sate apart from the mirthful crowd, their countenances averted from those faces of gladness, and their eyes directed towards the distant main, which showed dismal, dark, and waste, when contrasted with the bright scene within that gay floating-house of pleasure. Christian Loëffler united a somewhat exaggerated tone of sentiment with a certain moral firmness of mind, which is not unfrequently combined in the German character, and which, joining high-strung feelings with powers of soul sufficient to hold them in subjection, presents an exterior composed, and even phlegmatic, while the soul within glows like ignited matter beneath a surface of frigidity.

The revels broke up; and ere the sun had set on the succeeding day, the so recent pleasure-vessel was ploughing her solitary way on the Atlantic; her festive decorations vanished like a dream, and even the shores that had witnessed them were no longer within sight.

On the socond day of the voyage, the attention of Loëffler was forcibly arrested by the livid and almost indescribable appearance of a young seaman, who was mounting the main-shrouds of the vessel. Christian called to him, inquired if he were ill, and, in the voice of humanity, counselled him to descend. The young man did not, however, appear to hear the humane caution; and ere the lapse of a few seconds, he loosed his hold on the main-yards which he had reached, and rushing, with falling violence, through sails and rigging, was quickly precipitated to the deck. Loëffler ran to raise him; but not only was life extinct, even its very traces had disappeared, and—unlike one so recently warm with vitality—the features of the youth had assumed the livid and straightened character of a corpse long deprived of its animating principle.

The log-book, however, passed a verdict of "accidental death, occasioned by a fall from the main-yard," on the youth's case; and as such it went down in the marine record, amid notices of fair weather and foul, notwithstanding Loëffler's repeated representations of the young seaman's previous appearance. Christian's testimony was fated ere long to obtain a fearful credence. On the succeeding day several of the crew sickened; and ere the lapse of another twenty-four hours, death as well as sickness began to show itself. The captain became alarmed, and a report was soon whispered through the vessel that the hand of some direful, base, or revengeful Portuguese had mingled poison with the festive viands which had been liberally distributed to the whole crew at the farewell entertainment of the *Invincible.* Loëffler, although a German, was no great believer in tales of mystery and dark vengeance. A more fearful idea than even that of poison once or twice half-insinuated itself into his mind, but was forced from it with horror.

The wind, which had blown favorably for the first ten days of the voyage, now seemed totally to die away, and left the vessel becalmed in the midway ocean. But for the idle rocking occasioned by the under swell of the broad Atlantic waves, she might have seemed a fixture to those seas; for not even the minutest calculable fraction in her latitude and longitude could have been discovered, even by the nicest observer, for fourteen days. All this while a tropical sun sent its burning, searching rays on the vessel, whose increasing sick and dying gasped for air; and unable either to endure the suffocation below, or the fiery sunbeams above, choaked the gangways in their restless passage to and from deck, or giving themselves up in despair, called on death for relief. The whole crew were in consternation; and they who had still health and strength left to manage or clear the ship, went about their usual duties with the feelings of men who might, at a moment's warning, be summoned from them to death and eternal doom.

Loëffler had shown much courage during these fearful scenes, but when he beheld sickness and death mysteriously extending their reign around him, and bearing away the best and the bravest of that gallant crew, he began to think that the avenging hand of God was upon her; and turning his eye towards the broad sheet of ocean waves which rolled between him and the north-eastern horizon, was heard to murmur, "Farewell!—farewell!"

One night, after having for some time tended the beds of the sick and dying, Loëffler retired to his couch, and endeavored to gain in slumber a brief forgetfulness of all the thoughts that weighed down his spirit. But a death-like sickness came over him; his little cabin seemed to whirl round as if moving on a pivot, while his restless limbs found no space for their feverish evolutions in his confined berth. Christian began to think that his hour was coming, and he tried to raise his soul in prayer; but while he essayed to fix his thoughts on Heaven, he felt that his reason was fast yielding to the burning fever which seemed almost to be consuming his brain. He called for water, but none heard or answered his cries He crawled on deck, and, as the sun had now set several hours, hoped for a breath of the fresh air of heaven. He threw himself down, and turned his face towards the dark sky. But the atmosphere was sultry, heavy, oppressive. It appeared to lie like an insupportable weight on his chest. He called for the surgeon, but he called in vain; the surgeon himself was no more, and his deputy found a larger demand on his professional exertions than his powers, either physical or mental, were capable of encountering. A humane hand at length administered a cup of water. Even the very element was warm with the heat of the vessel. It produced, however, a temporary sensation of refreshment, and Loëffler partially slumbered. But who can describe that strange and pestilential sleep! A theatre seemed to be "lighted up within his brain," which teemed with strange, hideous, and portentous scenes, or figures whose very splendor was appalling. All the ship seemed lit with varied lamps; then the lamps vanished, and, instead of a natural and earthly illumination, it seemed as if the rigging, yards, and sails of the vessel were all made of living phosphor, or some strange ignited matter, which far and wide sent a lurid glare on the waters. Loëffler looked up long masts of bright and living fire, shrouds whose minutest interlacing were all of the same vivid element, yet clear, distinct, and unmixed by any excrescent flame which might take from the regular appearance of the rigging; while the size of the vessel seemed increased to the most unnatural dimensions, and her glowing top-masts—up which Loëffler strained his vision—seemed to pierce the skies. A preternatural and almost palpable darkness succeeded this ruddy light; then the long and loud blast of a trumpet, and the words, "Come to judgment, forgetters of your God!" sounded in Loëffler's ear. He groaned, struggled, tried to thrust his arms violently from him, and awoke.

He found his neck distended to torture by a hard and frightful swelling, which almost deprived his head of motion, and caused the most excruciating anguish, while similar indications on his side assured him that disease was collecting its angry venom. The thought he had often banished now rushed on Christian's mind; and a fearful test, by which he might prove its reality, now suddenly occurred to him. It seemed as if the delirium of his fever were sobered for a moment by the solemn trial he was about to make. He was lying near one of the ship-lights. He dragged himself, though with difficulty, towards it; he opened the breast of his shirt. All was decided. Three or four purple spots were clustered at his heart. Loëffler saw himself lost. Again he cast a languid and fevered glance toward the sullen waters which rolled onward to the Portuguese shore, and once more murmured, "Farewell! farewell! we meet not till the morning which wakes us to eternal doom." He next earnestly called for the surgeon. With difficulty that half-worn-out functionary was summoned to the prostrate German. "Know you," said Loëffler, as soon as he saw him, "know you what fearful foe now stalks in this doomed vessel?" He opened his breast, and said solemnly, "*The Plague* is amongst us!—

warn your captain !" The professional man stooped towards his pestilential patient, and whispered softly, "We know all—have known all from the beginning. Think you that all this fumigation—this smoking of pipes—this separation, as far as might be, of the whole from the sick, were remedies to arrest the spread of mortality from poisoned viands ? But breathe not, for Heaven's sake, your suspicions among this hapless crew. Fear is, in these cases, destruction. I have still hopes that the infection may be arrested."* But the surgeon's words were wasted on air. His patient's senses, roused only for an instant, had again wandered into the regions of delirious fancy, and the torture of his swollen members rendered that delirium almost frantic. The benevolent surgeon administered a nostrum, looked with compassion on a fellow being whom he considered doomed to destruction, and secure (despite his superior's fate) in what he had ever deemed professional exemption from infection, prepared to descend to the second-deck. He never reached it. A shivering fit was succeeded by deathly sickness. All the powers of nature seemed to be totally and instantaneously broken up ; the poison had reached the vitals, as in a moment—and the last hope of the fast-sickening crew was no more ! Those on deck rushed in overpowering consternation to the cabin of the captain. Death had been there, too ! He was extended, not only lifeless, but in a state of actual putrescence !

The scenes that followed are of a nature almost too appalling, and even revolting, for description. Let the reader conceive (if he can without having witnessed such a spectacle) the condition of a set of wretched beings, pent within a scorched prison-house, without commander, without medical assistance ; daily falling faster and faster, until there were not whole enough to tend the sick, nor living enough to bury the dead ; while the malady became every hour more baleful and virulent, from the increasing heat of the atmosphere, the number of living without attendance, and dead without a grave.

It was about five days after the portentous deaths of the surgeon and commander, that Loëffler awoke from a deep and lengthened, and, as all might well have deemed, a last slumber, which had succeeded the wild delirium of fever. He awoke like one returning to a world which he had for some time quitted. It was many minutes ere he could recollect his situation. He found himself still above deck, but placed on a mattress, and in a hammock. A portion of a cordial was near him. He drank it with the avidity, yet the difficulty, of exhaustion, and slightly partook of a sea-mess, which, from its appearance, might have been laid on his couch some days previously to the sleeper's awakening. Life and sense now rapidly revived in the naturally strong constitution of our young German. But they brought with them the most fearful and appalling sensations.

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* In foreign climates I have often heard the livid spots about the heart, above described, cited as *the tokens* of the plague.

The sun was blazing in the midst of heaven, and seemed to be sending its noontide ardor on an atmosphere loaded with pestilential vapor. With returned strength, Loëffler called aloud ; but no voice answered him. He began to listen with breathless attention ; not a sound, either of feet or voices, met his ear. A thought of horror, that for a moment half-stilled the pulsation at his heart, rushed on Loëffler's mind. He lay for a moment to recover himself, and collecting those powers of mind and body, over which a certain moral firmness of character, already noticed (joined, be it observed, with the better strength of good principles), had given him a *master's* command—he quitted his couch, and stood on deck. God of mercy ! what a sight met Loëffler's eye ! The whole deck was strewed with pestilential corpses, presenting every variety of hue which could mark the greater or less progress of the hand of putrefaction, and every conceivable attitnde which might indicate either the state of frantic anguish, or utter and hopeless exhaustion, in which the sufferers had expired. The hand, fast stiffening in its fixed clasp on the hair ; the set teeth and starting eyeballs showed where death had come as the reliever of those insupportable torments which attend the plague when it bears down its victim by the accumulated mass of its indurated and baleful ulcerations. Others, who had succumbed to its milder, more insidious, yet still more fatal (because more sudden and utterly hopeless) attack, lay in the helpless and composed attitude which might have passed for sleep ; but the livid and purple marks of these last corpses, scarce capable of being borne to their grave in the "integrity of their dimensions," showed that the hand of corruption had been even more busy with them than with the fiercer and more tortured victims of the pestilence. The *Invincible,* once the proudest and most gallant vessel which ever rode out a storm, or defied an enemy, now floated like a vast pest-house on the waters ; while the sun of that burning zone poured its merciless and unbroken beams on the still and pestiferous atmosphere. Not a sound, not a breeze, awoke the silence of the sullen and baleful air ; not a single sail broke the desolate uniformity of the horizon : sea and sky seemed to meet only to close in that hemisphere of poisonous exhalations. Christian sickened ; he turned round with a feeling of despair, and burying his face in the couch he had just quitted, sought a moment's refuge from the scene of horror. That moment was one of prayer ; the next was that of stern resolution. He forced down his throat a potation, from which his long-confirmed habits of sobriety would formerly have shrunk with disgust ; and, under the stimulous of this excitement, compelled himself to the revolting office of swallowing a food which he felt necessary to carry him through the task he contemplated. This task was twofold and tremendous. First, he determined to descend to the lower-decks, and see whether any convalescent, or even expiring victim yet survived, to whom he could tender his assistance; and, secondly, if all had fallen, he would essay the revolting, perhaps the impracticable, office of performing their watery sepulture.

Loëffler made several attempts to descend into those close and corrupted regions ere he could summon strength of heart or nerve to enter them. A profound stillness reigned there. He passed through long rows of hammocks, either the receptacle of decaying humanity, or—as was more often the case—dispossessed of their former occupiers, who had chosen rather to breathe their last above deck. But a veil shall be drawn over this fearful scene. It is enough to say that not one *living* being was found amid the corrupted wrecks of mortality which tenanted the silent, heated, and pestiferous wards of the inner decks. Loëffler was ALONE in the ship! His task was then decided. He could only consign his former companions to their wide and common grave. He essayed to lift a corpse; but—sick, gasping, and completely overcome—sank upon his very burden! It was evident he must wait until his strength was further restored; but to wait amid those heaps of decaying bodies seemed impossible.

Night sank upon the waters. The GERMAN began to stir in the soul of Loëffler. He was alone—the stillness so unbroken as to be startling. Perhaps within a thousand miles there might be no living human being. He felt himself a solitary, vital thing among heaps of dead, whose corpses, here and there, emitted the phosphoric light of putrescence. He started at every creak of the vessel, and sometimes fancied that he descried, through the darkness, the well-known and reanimate face of some departed shipmate. But Christian's was not a mind to succumb to a terror which, it must be confessed, might—under similar circumstances—have overborne the stoutest heart. He felt that, under all these disadvantages, his strength was returning in a manner that appeared almost miraculous; and that same night saw many an appalling wreck of humanity consigned to decent oblivion. Sometimes the heart of Loëffler half sunk within him; sometimes he was more than tempted to relinquish his work in despair; yet on he toiled with that energy of body which as much results from mental power as from physical superiority.

On the evening of the following day, but one human form tenanted that deserted ship. As he saw the last of her gallant crew sink beneath the waves, Christian fell on his knees, and—well acquainted with the mother tongue of his departed companions—he took the sacred ritual of their church in his hand.

The sun was setting, and by its parting beams Loëffler, with a steady and solemn voice—as if there were those who might hear the imposing service—read aloud the burial-rites of the Church of England. Scarcely had he pronounced the concluding blessing ere the sun sank, and the instantaneous darkness of a tropical night succeeded. Loëffler cast a farewell glance on the dun waves, and then sighed, "Rest—rest, brave companions! until a voice shall sound stronger than your deep slumber—until the sea give up its dead, and you rise to meet your Judge!" The noise of the sharks dashing from the waters, to see if yet more victims awaited their insatiable jaw, was the only response to the obsequies of that gallant crew, which had now disappeared forever.

A few sails were still furled, and, uncertain whether they were the best or the worst that might be hoisted, Loëffler determined to leave them, preferring the chance that should waft him to *any* port, to the prolonged imprisonment of the *Invincible*

Christian sank down, as he concluded his strange and dismal office, completely overwhelmed by physical exertions and the intensity of his hitherto-stifled feelings. But there was no hand to wipe the dew from his pale forehead; no voice to speak a word of encouragement or sympathy.

And where was it all to end! Loëffler was no seaman; and, therefore, even if one hand could have steered the noble vessel, *his* was not that hand. Doubtless, the plague had broken out in Portugal; and consequently the *Invincible*, who had so recently sailed from her capital, would (as in all similar cases) be avoided by her sisters of the ocean.

These thoughts suggested themselves to Christian's mind, as, gradually recovering from the senselessness of exhaustion, he lay stretched on deck, listening to the scarcely perceptible noise of the water, as it faintly rolled against the side of the vessel, and as softly receded; while his soul, as it recalled the form of his best-beloved on earth, rose in prayer for her and for himself.

Week after week passed away, and still the Solitary Man of the Sea was the lone occupant of the crewless and now partially dismantled *Invincible*. She had been the sport of many a varying wind, at whose caprice she had performed more than one short and useless voyage round the fatal spot where she had been so long becalmed; but still, as if that were the magical, and even malevolent centre of her movements, she seldom made much way beyond it; and light, deceitful breezes were constantly followed by renewed calms. A tropical equinox was, however, drawing near, though the lone seaman was not aware of its approach. The time which he had passed in the anguish of disease, and the aberrations of delirium, had appeared to him of much greater length than its actual duration; and as no tongue survived to correct his error, he had lost all calculations of the motions of time. He listened, therefore, with an ear half-fearful, half-hopeful, to the risings of the blast. At first it began to whistle shrilly through the shrouds and rigging; the whistle deepened into a thundering roar, and the idle rocking of the ship was changed into the boisterous motion of a storm-beaten vessel. Loëffler, however, threw himself as usual on deck for his night's repose; and, wrapped in his sea-cloak, was rocked to slumber even by the stormy lullaby of the elements.

Towards midnight the voice of the tempest began to deepen to a tone of ominous and apparently concentrating force, which might have started the most reckless slumberer. Sheets of lightning—playing from one extremity of the sky to the other—showed the dense masses of rent and scattered clouds which blackened the face of heaven; while the peal of thunder that followed seemed to pour its full tide of fury immediately over the fated ship. The blast, when contrasted with the still atmosphere and oppressive heat which had preceded it, appeared to Loëffler piercing, and even wintry cold; while the fierce and unintermittant motion of the vessel rendered it almost difficult for him to preserve a footing on deck. By every fresh flash of lightning, he could see wide-spread and increasing sheets of surge running towards the ship with a fury that half suggested the idea of malevolent volition on their part; while they dashed against the sides with a violence which seemed to drive in her timbers, and swamped the deck with foam and billows. Whether any of these storm-tossed waves made their way below—or whether the ship, so long deprived of nautical examination, had sprung a leak in the first encounter of the tempest—Loëffle could not determine; but the conviction that she was filling with water forced itself on his mind. He again cast his eyes to the north-eastern horizon, and again uttered aloud—"Farewell farewell!"

The loneliness of his situation, to which time, though it had not reconciled, had habituated him, came upon him with the renewed and appalling sensations of novelty. National and early-acquired feelings obtained a temporary triumph over individual strength of character. The torn and misshapen clouds, as their black forms were from time to time rendered visible by the blue light that darted through them, appeared to our young German like careering spirits of the tempest; and the rent sails, as they flapped backwards and forwards, or were driven like shattered pennons of the blast, seemed, as the momentary light cast their dark shadows athwart the deck, to be foul fiends of the ocean, engaged in the malign work of dismantling that gallant ship. To Loëffler's temporarily excited imagination, even the tossing billows seemed, in that portentous light, to "surge up" by hundreds the faces of those who had found beneath them a dismal and untimely grave; and the lost mariners appeared to be crowding round the vessel they had so recently manned. But Christian authoritatively bade away these phantoms, and they speedily left a mind too strong to give them a long entertainment.

The storm subsided, and the moon, rising over dense masses of cloud—which, dispersed from the mid-heaven, now cumbered the horizon—saw our young German lying, in the sleep of confidence and exhaustion, on the still humid deck. He slumbered on, unconscious that the main-deck was now almost level with the waves—unconscious of the dark gulf preparing to receive him! The very steadiness which the waters, accumulating within her, had given to the ship, protracted the fatal repose of the sleeper. He woke not until his senses were restored, too late, by the gushing of the waters over the deck.

Down, down, a thousand fathom deep, goes the gallant and ill-fated vessel; and with her—drawn into her dark vortex—sinks her lone and unpitied inhabitant!

It was in less than a month after this event that Loëffler awoke in a spacious and beautiful apartment, the windows of which opened into a garden of orange and lime-trees, whose sweet scent filled the air, and whose bright verdure and golden fruit showed gay and cheerful in the sunshine. Christian believed that his awakening was in paradise; nor was the thought less easily harbored that the object he best loved in life stood by his couch, while his head rested on her arm. "And thou too," he said, confusedly,—"thou, too, hast reached the fair land of peace, the golden garden of God!" "His senses are returning—he speaks—he knows me!" exclaimed Ernestine, clasping her hands in gratitude to Heaven.

She had just received her husband from the hands of the stout captain of a Dutch galliot, whose crew had discovered and rescued the floating and senseless body of Christian on the very morning succeeding the catastrophe we have described. The humble galliot had a speedier and safer passage than the noble man of war; and, in an unusually short time, she made the harbor of Lisbon, to which port she was bound. It is needless to add that the German recovered both his health and intellect, and lived to increase the tender devotion of his bride, by a recital of the dangers and horrors of his Solitary Voyage.

THE HUNGARIAN HORSE DEALER.

On the third night after his departure from Vienna, he stopped at a quiet inn, situated in the suburbs of a small town. He had never been there before, but the house was comfortable, and the appearances of the people about it respectable. Having first attended to his tired horse, he sat down to supper with his host and family. During the meal, he was asked whence he came; and when he said from Vienna, all present were anxious to hear the news. The dealer told them all he knew. The host then inquired what business had carried him to Vienna. He told them he had been there to sell some of the best horses that were ever taken to that market. When he heard this, the host cast a glance at one of the men of the family, who seemed to be his son, which the dealer scarcely observed then, but which he had reason to recall afterwards. When supper was finished, the fatigued traveller requested to be shown to his bed. The host himself took up a light, and conducted him across a little yard at the back of the house to a detached building, which contained two rooms, tolerably decent for a Hungarian hotel. In the inner of these rooms was a bed. And here the host left him to himself. As the dealer threw off his jacket, and loosened the girdle round his waist where his money was deposited, he thought he might as well see whether it was all safe. Accordingly he drew out an old leathern purse that contained his gold, and then a tattered parchment pocket-book that contained the Austrian bank notes, and finding that both were quite right, he laid them under his bolster, extinguished the light, and threw himself on the bed, thanking God and the saints that had carried him thus far homeward in safety. He had no misgiving as to the character of the people he had fallen amongst to hinder his repose, and the poor dealer was very soon enjoying a profound and happy sleep. He might have been in this state of beatitude an hour or two, when he was disturbed by a noise like that of an opening window, and by a sudden rush of cool night air; on raising himself on the bed, he saw peering through an open window, which was almost immediately above the bed, the head and shoulders of a man, who was evidently attempting to make his ingress into the room that way. As the terrified dealer looked, the intruding figure was withdrawn, and he heard a rumbling noise, and then the voices of several men, as he thought, close under the window. The most dreadful apprehensions, the more horrible as they were so sudden, now agitated the traveller, who, scarcely knowing what he did, but utterly despairing of preserving his life, threw himself under the bed. He had scarcely done so, when the hard breathing of a man was heard at the open window, and the next moment a robust fellow dropped into the room, and after staggering across it, groped his way by the walls to the bed. Fear had almost deprived the horse dealer of his senses, but yet he perceived that the intruder, whoever he might be, was drunk. There was, however, slight comfort in this, for he might only have swallowed wine to make him the more desperate, and the traveller was convinced he had heard the voices of other men without, who might climb into the room to assist their brother villain in case any resistance should be made. His astonishment was great and reviving, when he heard the fellow throw off his jacket on the floor, and then toss himself upon the bed under which he lay. Terror, however, had taken too firm a hold of the traveller to be shaken off at once; his ideas were too confused to permit his imagining any other motive for such a midnight intrusion on an unarmed man with property about him, save that of a robbery and assassination, and he lay quiet where he was until he heard the fellow snoring with all the sonorousness of a drunkard. Then, indeed, he would have left his hiding place, and gone to rouse the people in the inn to get another resting place instead of the bed of which he had been dispossessed in so singular a manner; but just as he came to this resolution, he heard the outer room open—then stealthy steps cross it—then the door of the very room he was in was softly opened, and two men, one of whom was the host and the other the son, appeared on its threshold. "Leave the light where it is," whispered the host, "or it may disturb him, and give us trouble." "There is no fear of that," said the youngest man, also in a whisper, "we are two to one; he has nothing but a little knife about him—he is dead asleep too! hear how he snores!" "Do my bidding," said the old man sternly; "would you have him wake, and rouse the neighborhood with his screams?" As it was, the horror-stricken dealer under the bed could scarcely suppress a shriek, but he saw that the son left the light in the outer room, and then, pulling the door partially after them to skreen the rays of the lamp from the bed, he saw the two murderers glide to the bed-side, and then heard a rustling motion as of arms descending on the bed-clothes, and a hissing, and then a grating sound, that turned his soul sick, for he knew it came from knives or daggers penetrating to the heart or vitals of a human being like himself, and only a few inches above his own body. This was followed by one sudden and violent start on the bed, accompanied by a moan. Then the bed, which was a low one, was bent by an increase of weight caused by one or both the murderers throwing themselves upon it, until it pressed on the body of the traveller. There was an awful silence for a moment or two, and then the host said, " he is finished—I have cut him across the throat—take the money, I saw him put it under his bolster." "I have it, here it is," said the son, " a purse and a pocket-book."

The traveller was then relieved from the weight which had pressed him almost to suffocation ; and the assassins, who seemed to tremble as they went, ran out of the room, took up the light and disappeared altogether from the apartment. No sooner were they fairly gone than the poor dealer crawled from under the bed, took one desperate leap, and escaped through the window by which he had seen enter the unfortunate wretch, who had evidently been murdered in his stead. He ran with all his speed into the town, where he told his horrid story and miraculous escape to the night-watch. The night-watch conducted him to the burgomaster, who was soon aroused from his sleep, and acquainted him with all that had happened. In less than half an hour from the time of his escape from it, the horse dealer was again at the murderous inn, with the magistrate and a strong force of the horror-stricken inhabitants and the night-watch, who had all ran hither in the greatest silence. In the house all seemed as still as death ; but as the party went round to the stables they heard a noise ; cautioning the rest to surround the inn and the outhouses, the magistrate, with the traveller and some half dozen armed men, ran to the stable door ; this they opened, and found within, the host and his son digging a grave. The first figure that met the eyes of the murderers was that of the traveller. The effect of this on their guilty souls was too much to be borne ; they shrieked, and threw themselves on the ground ; and, though they were immediately seized by hard griping hands of real flesh and blood, and heard the voices of the magistrate and their friends and neighbors, denouncing them as murderers, it was some minutes ere they could believe that the figure of the traveller that stood among them was other than a spirit. It was the hardier villain, the father, who, on the stranger's voice continuing in conversation with the magistrate, first gained sufficient command over himself to raise his face from the earth ; he saw the stranger pale and haggard, but evidently unhurt. The murderer's head spun round confusedly ; but, at length rising, he said to those who held him, " let me see that stranger nearer ; let me touch him !" The poor horse dealer drew back in horror and disgust. " You may satisfy him in this," said the magistrate ; " he is unarmed and unnerved, and we are here to prevent his doing you harm." On this the traveller let the host approach him, and pass his hand over his person, which, when he had done, the villain exclaimed, " I am no murderer !—Who says I am a murderer ?" " That we shall see anon," said the traveller, who led the way to the detached apartment, followed by the magistrate, by the two prisoners, and all the party which had collected in the stable on hearing what passed there. Both father and son walked with considerable confidence into the room ; but when they saw, by the lamps the night-watch and others held over it, that there was a body covered with blood, lying upon the bed, they cried out, "How is this ! who is this !" and rushed together to the bed side. The lights were lowered ; their rays fell upon the ghastly face and bleeding throat of a young man. At the sight, the younger of the murderers turned his head, and swooned in silence, but the father uttered a shriek so loud, so awful, that one of the eternally damned alone might equal its effect, threw himself on the bed, and on the gashed and bloody body, murmuring in his throat, "My son, I have killed mine own son !" also found a temporary relief from the horrors of his situation in insensibility. The next minute the wretched hostess, who was innocent of all that had passed, and who was, without knowing it, the wife of a murderer, the mother of a murderer, and the mother of a murdered son—of a son killed by a brother and a father, ran to the apartment, and would have increased tenfold its already insupportable horrors by entering there, had she not been prevented by the honest townspeople. She had been roused from sleep by the noise made in the stable, and then by her husband's shrieks, and was now herself shrieking and frantic, carried back to the inn by the main force. The two murderers were forthwith bound and carried to the town goal, where, on examination which was made the next morning, it appeared from evidence that the person murdered was the youngest son of the landlord of the inn, and a person never suspected of any crime more serious than habitual drunkenness ; that instead of being in bed, as his father and brother had believed him, he had stolen out of the house, and joined a party of carousers in the town : of these boon companions, all appeared in evidence ; and two of them supposed that the deceased, being exceedingly intoxicated, and dreading his father's wrath, should he rouse the house in such a state, and at that late hour, had said to them that he would get through the window into the little detached apartment, and sleep there, as he had often done before, and that they two accompanied him to help him to climb to the window. The deceased had reached the window once, and as they thought would have got safe through it, but drunk and unsteady as he was, he slipped back ; they had then some difficulty in inducing him to climb again, for, in the caprice of intoxication, he said he would rather go to sleep with one of his comrades. However, he had at last effected his entrance, and they, his two comrades, had gone to their respective homes. The wretched criminals were executed a few weeks after the commission of the crime. They had confessed every thing, and restored to the horse dealer the gold and paper money they had concealed, and which had led them to do a deed so much more atrocious than even they had contemplated.

THE WRECKERS OF ST. AGNES.

There are few parts of England more wild and desolate than the mining districts of Cornwall. Nature, as a counterpoise to the treasures which she has lavished on this region of her bounty, has imparted to its features a most forbidding aspect. Bleak and barren plains, unenlivened by vegetation, with neither tree nor shrub to protect the traveller from the wind that sweeps across their surface, and danger in every step, from the innumerable shafts by which they are intersected.

It is truly an inhospitable country; and the nature of the inhabitants seems quite in accordance with its unfriendly characteristics—repulsive and ungainly in appearance, disgusting and ferocious in manner, cruel by nature, and treacherously cunning. Not a step have they gained from the barbarous state of their savage ancestors. I allude more particularly to the town and district of St. Agnes., near Truro, and its people. St. Agnes is a small place, situated on the coast of Cornwall, about ten miles from Truro, across one of those sterile plains, almost covered with the refuse of mines, and perforated in every direction, like a gigantic rabbit-warren. The road, so called, through this waste, is little better than a track, which it would be difficult and dangerous to traverse, without a guide. Many a wanderer has found a nameless grave, by venturing rashly across those dreary moors.

It was late in the autumn when I visited St. Agnes, and it was towards the close of a gloomy day that I found myself at the residence of Captain Thomas, so I shall call him, whose acquaintance I had made in London, and who had succeeded in persuading me, that the only sure way to make a fortune was, by investing a trifle of ready money in a copper-mine. He held the rank of captain by the custom of the country, as a mine is conducted, like a ship, by a captain and officers. The captain was rather a decent specimen of his caste; for, where all are combinations of the miner, smuggler, wrecker, and, consequently, ruffian, a man even of decent manners is something. He had one fault, however, which I afterwards discovered:—He would have considered it a most meritorious employment, to have robbed even his own father. rather than not to have robbed at all.

Our repast being over, and I, like a witless booby, having invested my bank-notes in his pouch, in exchange for certain bits of paper he was pleased to call shares; and having received from him, in addition to such valuable considerations, the most flattering congratulations on the prospect of immediate wealth, he proposed an adjournment to the "Red Dragon," or red something; I almost forget, it is so long since; where he assured me I should meet a most respectable society, and where I might pick up much valuable information. They were all particular friends of his—captains and pursers of mines.

It was a dismal night. When we sallied out, a thick mist was gathering around; the sea was breaking against the huge rocky cliffs of the adjacent coast, with a deafening roar; and at intervals was heard the distant thunder. It was with no uncomfortable feeling, that I felt myself safely housed at the rendezvous of the choice spirits of the mines.

The party to which I was introduced was seated at a long deal table, in a spacious apartment, half kitchen, half tap-room; at the upper end of which appeared a blazing fire, beneath a chimney-porch of a most ancient and approved formation. On one side of the room, a door opened into a small parlor, and in the corner was a little bar, for the host to dispense to his customers their various potations from his smuggled treasures. For, although it was not a trifle of Schidam or Cogniac that would satisfy these congregated worthies, I question whether the king could afford to pay the salaries of the commissioners of excise, if the greater portion of his lieges were not more considerate customers than our friends of the "Red Dragon."

The arrival of Captain Thomas was hailed with marked satisfaction. We were soon seated, and in a twinkling a large tumbler of hot brandy and water was placed before me, and a pipe thrust into my hand. The conversation, which was rather loud when we entered, was now suddenly hushed, and intelligent glances were quickly interchanged, which I saw related to myself. Thomas understood it, and said, "You need not be afraid; that gentleman is a particular friend of mine, and a great patron of the mining arts."

I then begged to assure the company of my veneration for miners and mines, and all connected with them. There was a visible brightening up at this declaration, and doubtless at that moment various were the plans of swindling and rascality which shot through the stolid brains of that pleasant coterie to put my devotedness to the proof.

"A likely night this, Captain Thomas," said a beetle-browed, shock-headed, short, muscular man, whose small dark eyes peered from beneath a brow of peculiar ferocity.

"Uncommon likely!" returned the other, "and if we should have a bit of luck to-night, it would not be a bad beginning this winter."

"Ah!" said the former, who answered to the name of Knox, "my wife says she thinks Providence has deserted our coast we have n't had a godsend worth telling about these two years. I 've seen the time when we 've had a matter of a dozen wracks in a season."

"Well, never mind, Master Knox," said a pert-looking, snub-nosed fellow, named Roberts, who I at first glance took for an attorney, but afterwards found that he was a mining-agent. From his more constant intercourse with Truro, he was rather better dressed than some of his companions; but his town breeding gave him no other advantage than a conceited, saucy air. "Never mind, Master Knox," said he, jingling a bunch of seals which peeped from beneath the waistcoat of that worthy, "you have made the most of your luck, and if you do n't get any more you won't harm."

"Why, yes," said the fellow, drawing out a handsome gold watch, which accorded curiously with his coarse attire. "I do n't complain of the past; and yet I had a narrow escape with this; if it had n't been for my boy Jem, I should have lost it."

"He 's a 'cute child, that boy of yours," remarked one.

"There never was a 'cuter. I 'll tell you, sir," said he, addressing me. "It is two years ago, come December, on a Sunday, when we were all in church, that we had news of a wrack. Well, off we all started you may be sure, and the parson not the last, to see what it had pleased God to send us. We found on coming up, that it was a French India-man. She had gone to pieces off the rocks, and the goods were floating about like dirt. I was n't long in making the most of it; and Jem was just going off for the cart, when I 'spied, half covered with weed, and hidden by a piece of rock, the body of a Frenchman. I soon saw I had got a prize, for he was loaded with money and trinkets. These I quickly eased him of, seeing as he 'd never want 'em; but to make sure, I hit 'un a good slap over the head just to see whether the life was in 'un or no." [Here one or two of the auditors grinned.] "Well, I was just going away, when I see'd a diamond ring on his finger, and the finger being swelled with the water, I cuts it off" [displaying at the same time a knife of rather formidable proportions] "and walks off with my goods. I had n't gone far, when little Jem runs after, crying, 'Dad, dad! hit 'un again dad! he grin'th, he grin'th!' I looked back, and sure enough that rascally French thief—whether it was drawing the blood or not, I do n't know—but he was moving his arm about, and opening his eyes, as though he were bent on taking the bread out of my mouth. This put me in a precious rage—these Frenchmen are always a spiteful set, and hate Englishmen as they hate the devil. So I makes no more ado but I hits 'un a lick with the tail of a rudder laying close by, and I 'll warrant me he never come to ask for my goods."

The miscreant chuckled over this horrid recital with all the self-satisfaction that another might feel at the recollection of a virtuous action; whilst his companions, to whom no doubt the story was familiar, felt no other sensations of uneasiness at its recapitulation, than from the recollection that they had not been able to do the same thing. Knox was evidently the ruffian *par excellence*. I beheld others around me, the expression of whose countenances would have hung them at any bar in England without any other evidence; yet none ventured to boast of crime; Knox was the only open professor of villainy, and seemed to claim his right of pre-eminence. I have been in many parts of the world, and have encountered ruffians of every country and grade; but never before did I have the fortune to hear depravity, and of such a revolting character, so freely confessed, so unblushingly avowed.

"Well, Knox," said Thomas, after a short pause, "so you have seen Hibbert Shear. How 's poor Bill Trecuddick?"

Knox placed his finger significantly on his cheek.

"How," said the other, "dead!"

"Dead as mackerel," returned Knox; "you know I was in it, and a sharp brush we had. Poor Bill had three balls in him: he died the same night." A universal expression of sympathy followed this announcement, and various were the questions put by different individuals as to the details of his death. It appeared that he was killed in an engagement with a revenue cruiser.

"He was as likely a lad that ever run a cargo," said Thomas; "where did you bury him?"

"Along side of the gauger, I s'pose," said Roberts, who ventured a sidelong glance of malicious meaning, though apparently half doubtful of the consequences. I never saw so speedy a change in any human being as that remark produced in Knox. In an instant his brow became as black as the storm which now raged with appalling violence from without.

"What hast thee to do with that, thou pert, meddling coxcomb?" said he, as he fixed his black eyes, almost concealed by their overhanging brows, on the object of his wrath. "Now mark me, Master Roberts; play off no more of thy jokes on me. This is not the first time I have warned thee; but it shall be the last."

I learned afterwards that the gauger alluded to was Knox's half-brother, who was supposed to have met with his death by the hands of his relation, and his body flung down a shaft near the sea, now known by the name of the Gauger's Shaft. What confirmed the suspicion was that he was known to have frightful dreams about his murdered brother, and some said that he was known to tremble like a child if left alone at night. Be that as it might, however, a ferocious altercation was now proceeding between Knox and a friend of Roberts, who had replied to the other's threats, which appeared likely to proceed to serious consequences, had not the attention of all parties been diverted by a loud and continued knocking at the outer door. This seemed so unusual an occurrence that the host hesitated to unbar, for never was a stranger known to arrive at St. Agnes at such an hour, and on such a night too; for we heard the rain descend in torrents, and the thunder howling at intervals.

The knocking continued vehemently, and although we were too many to fear any thing like personal danger, yet I could see an evident though undefinable fear spreading throughout the party, sufficiently expressed by their anxious glances. In no one was such an expression more visible than in Knox. It was the result of some superstitious feeling, which the conversation of the night, and the awful storm now raging about them, had called into play.

The knocking was now fiercer than ever, and the host was at last constrained to unbolt and unbar: the guest, whoever he was, would take no denial. As the door opened, in stalked a tall, weather-beaten looking man, enveloped in a huge shaggy great-coat, and a broad oil-skin hat on his head.

"What the devil dost thee mean by this?" he said, dashing his hat upon the floor, and shaking the rain from his coat like a huge water-dog,—"keeping a traveller outside your gates on such a night!" At this moment, during a lull in the storm, was heard a heavy booming sound from the sea.

"A wrack! a wrack!" shouted Knox; and instantly a dozen fellows were on their legs ready to rush forth like thirsty bloodhounds on their prey. "Keep your places, you fools!" cried the stranger, "if she goes ashore it will be many miles from here, with the wind in this quarter." They all seemed to acknowledge the justice of the remark, by sulkily resuming their places. "I 've heard the guns some time," continued the stranger; "but she has good offing yet, and she may manage to keep off. I 'd lay my life she is a foreign craft, they 're always in such a plaguey hurry to sing out." The company had leisure by this time, to seat themselves and resume their pipes. They likewise, seeing he was no ghost, took the liberty of scanning their guest. He was not very remarkable further than being a tall, muscular man, with short curling black hair, immense bushy whiskers, meeting under his chin, and large black eyes. Altogether it was not an unpleasant countenance. He did not apologize for his intrusion, but called at once for his pipe and his glass.

"Did you come from Truro side?" asked Knox. The stranger took a huge whiff, and nodded assent.

"Who might have brought you across the moors?"

"Dost thou think no one can tread the moors but thyself and the louts of St. Agnes?"

"None that I ever heard of, except Beelzebub;" said Knox, peering from beneath his brows suspiciously on the new comer. The stranger laughed.

"The path is dangerous by night," said Thomas; "few strangers find the way alone."

"Then I am one of the few, for here I am," said he.

"I 've lived here man and boy these forty years," said Knox, "and I never knew a stranger do that before. And thou must be a stranger, for I 've never seen thee."

"Art sure of that?"—Knox again scanned him attentively.

"I never saw thee before."

"You see then a stranger can find his way in these parts. I came by the gauger's shaft. Thou know'st the gauger's shaft," said he significantly.

"Hell!" said the other furiously, "dost thou come here to mock me? if thou dost thou 'dst better return afore harm comes of thee."

"Thou 'rt a strong man;" said his opponent; "but I 'm so much a stronger, that I would hold thee with one arm on yonder fire till thou wert as black as thy own black heart. Come, thou need'st not frown on me man, if thou hast a spark of courage I 'll put it now to the test."

"Courage! I fear neither thee nor Beelzebub!"

"I 'll wager thee this heavy purse of French *louis d'ors* against that watch, and ring that befits thy finger so oddly, that thou durst not go into yonder room alone, and look on the face that shall meet thee there."

"Thou 'rt a juggler and a cheat—I 'll have nothing further to say to thee."

"There 's my gold," said he, throwing a heavy purse on the table; "look at it; count it; a hundred as bright *louis* as ever were coined in France, against thy watch and ring, not worth the half." The eyes of the wrecker glistened at the bright heap of gold. "What is the wager?" he demanded.

"If thou durst go into yonder room, that I will raise the form of one whom thou wouldst most dread to see."

"I fear nothing, and believe thee to be a cheat."

"There 's my gold."

"Take the wager!" cried several of Knox's friends; "we 'll see thou hast the gold."

"Done!" cried Knox, with a sort of desperate resolve, which the cheers of his friends, and the sight of the gold helped him to assume; and he placed the ring and watch on the heap of *louis*.

"I must have arms and lights."

"Take them;" said the stranger: "but before you go, I will show you a portion of your property you have never discovered." He took up the ring, and touching the inside with the point of a pin a small aperture flew open, and disclosed a small space filled with hair. It was not till that moment it was discovered that the stranger had lost the little finger of the left hand!" for a moment all was still as the grave. A frightful feeling seemed to pervade the breast of every one around. It was as though the murdered stood before them to claim his own! The stranger broke into a loud laugh "What the devil ails you all? are you afraid of a man without a finger?" and his laughter was louder than before.

"I 'll not go into the room," said Knox, in a low, broken voice.

"Then the watch and ring are mine," said the stranger. "You have forfeited the wager;" and he began to fill the bag with the coin.

"It 's a base juggle to rob me of my property," cried Knox, whose courage returned as he witnessed the unghostlike manner in which the stranger fingered the money.

"Keep to your wager, man," cried Thomas, "we 'll see you rightly dealt with. He can no more do what he says, than raise the prince of darkness himself."

"Will you stand to your bargain?" asked the stranger.

"I will; and defy the devil and all his works." He took a candle and a loaded pistol, and went towards the room. If ever the agony of a life were condensed into the short space of a few minutes, that was the time. Ruffian as he was, he was a pitiable object. Pale and trembling, without making an effort to conceal his distress, he paused and turned irresolute even at the threshold of the door. Shame and avarice urged him on. He entered the room and closed the door.

If I say that I looked on as a calm spectator of these proceedings, I should say falsely. I began to grow nervous, and was infected with the superstitious feeling which had evidently taken possession of my companions. The only unconcerned person was the stranger; at least, he was apparently so. He very coolly tied up the money, watch, and ring in the bag, and placed them on the table. He then took two pieces of paper, and wrote some characters on both; one he handed to Thomas: it was marked with the name of the gauger: the other he kept himself. He advanced to the fire, which was blazing brightly, and, muttering a few words, threw into it a small leaden pacquet, and retired at the same moment to the end of the room. The flames had hardly time to melt the thin sheet-lead, ere our ears were greeted with the most terrific and appalling explosion that I have ever in my life heard, and as though the elements were in unison, a deafening thunder crash shook the house to its very foundation. Every man was thrown violently to the ground; the chairs and tables tumbled about, as though imbued with life; every door was burst open by the shock, and hardly a pane of glass remained entire. This, with the screams of the women, and the groans of the men, if any one could withstand, without actual terror taking possession of his heart, he must be a bolder man than I was. For several minutes (for so it appeared to me) did we lie on the floor in this state, expecting, momentarily, the house to fall over us in ruins. All was, however, silent as death, except the pealing of the thunder and the roaring of the storm; so that when the sense of suffocation was somewhat removed by the fresh air forcing through the open doors and windows, we ventured to hail each other.

It was sometime, however, before we could get a light; and that accomplished, our first care was to look to our friend in the back parlor. We found him lying on his face quite insensible, and bleeding from a wound in the head, which he must have received in falling. We brought him into the large room; and after a time, when people could be brought to their senses, we procured restoratives. I never shall forget the wild and ghastly look with which he first gazed around him. He looked around, as though seeking some horrid object. "It 's gone," he cried; "thank God!—what a horrid sight!—who saw it?" "Saw what? who?" asked Thomas. "Just as bloody and ghastly, as when I pitched him down the shaft," cried he incoherently.

"Hush! hush!" said Thomas; "collect yourself—you don't know what you 're talking of." "Who says I murdered him?" cried the miserable being before us. "Who says I got his money? He 's a liar, I say a liar. His money is sunk with him. Let 'em hang me—I am innocent.—They cannot prove it." It became too distressing. Fortunately for the feelings of all, the unhappy man, or rather maniac, relapsed into insensibility, and in that state was conveyed home

It was not till then that we thought of the stranger. No trace of him could be found. The money, ring, and watch, had disappeared.

Strange were the rumors abroad the next day at St. Agnes. Some men going very early to work, averred they saw a horseman flying over the moors, crossing shafts and pits, without once staying to pick his way. It could have been no human horseman, nor steed, that could have sped on such a wild career. There was another report, which accounted for the appearance and disappearance of the stranger in another way. Some smugglers reported, that on that night they saw a beautiful French smuggling lugger sheltering from the gale in a little unfrequented bay along the coast. It might have been one of the crew, who had made himself acquainted with the circumstances he mentionod, and which was no secret, and made this bold dash for a prize: but this version of the story was scouted, as quite unworthy of the slightest credit. The former was the popular belief.

If any one of the *dramatis personæ* of the above sketch should happen to cast his eye over it, which, by the way, is the most unlikely thing possible, seeing the great probability that they have all been hanged long since; but if by *alibi*, or any other convenient means, only one should have escaped from justice, he will bear witness to the faithfulness of my narrative; and acknowledge, with gratitude, the obligation of immortality in the Monthly Magazine.

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